United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154 WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2008 No. 101

House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m.

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

Water, not only the essential planetary element, O Lord, water itself ushers in new human life. For Your people of covenant, both old and new, the symbol of water is complex, never stable, always fresh and beautiful, sometimes fearful and tragic.

As the Spring of Salvation, we call upon Your Holy Name to calm the waters of anxiety in mid-America. Enable Your people to cross these present waters of disaster and bring them to Your promised land of fruitful plenty.

In the book of Joshua, water upon the fleece is Joshua's own test of Your presence in the midst of trouble; later the way his people take water unto themselves becomes their measurement.

End this waterboarding of America's fields and rural towns even if we can no longer define torture ourselves. By the wellspring of Your Spirit, mix all our human endeavors with our natural resources in such an outstanding victory that believers and unbelievers alike will be touched again as in Joshua's day and acclaim: ''Their hearts melted and became as water!''

This is our prayer now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). 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 Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 37 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN) at 10 a.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate concurs in the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 2146) ''An Act to authorize the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to accept, as part of a settlement, diesel emission reduction Supplemental Environmental Projects, and for other purposes.''

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 1-minute speeches on each side.

CONGRESS PROACTIVE IN ADDRESSING ENERGY PROBLEM

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, as prices at the pump continue to hit record highs, the time has come to put partisanship behind us and come together to work and solve the problems to help American people who are struggling to make ends meet.

We enacted legislation to inject into the market an additional 70,000 barrels of oil per day by suspending shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve beginning two weeks from today. We raised auto fuel efficiency standards for the first time in 30 years. And we are nearing completion of a bill to regulate the speculators who manipulate the price of oil in the worldwide market.

This Congress has been proactive in doing everything we can to address the problem. Rather than pointing fingers, casting blame and trying to score cheap political points, I hope the minority in this Congress will join us in our effort to take swift and decisive action to address the rising price of gas.

GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, for many Americans, pulling up to the gas station is becoming a dreaded event. There have been some short-term remedies, but with prices at $4 per gallon, any relief must be paired with a broader energy plan which unlocks American resources.

Current U.S. policy unnecessarily keeps many areas off limits to exploration, restraining additional growth and supply. High fuel prices impact rural areas the hardest. Long commutes are a way of life, and crushing gas prices have hit farmers and ranchers in every aspect of their lives.

Unfortunately, several special interest groups have said no to virtually

Printed on recycled paper.

every solution, including clean, renewable hydropower, non-emitting nuclear power, clean coal technology, wind power, and domestic exploration and development.

It has been over 20 years since President Ronald Reagan called on Congress to lease ANWR. It has been over 30 years since a new refinery has come on line. Since then, America has paid the price for delay, and we are paying the price every time we pull up to the pump.

DEMOCRATIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS ON THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, for years, President Bush has prioritized the needs of the wealthiest few while taking us deep into debt and into an economic recession. In the meantime, most Americans have been forgotten. That is, until the Democrats took control of Congress last year.

We were the first to recognize that our economy was headed for a recession and pushed the President to join us in passing the economic stimulus package that provided assistance to middle-income Americans. While that was a good start, we know that more needs to be done to help those who are not prospering under this Bush economy. That is why we extended unemployment insurance for the growing number of Americans looking for work and why we tackled the housing foreclosure crisis, so that millions of Americans can keep their homes. We also support a second economic stimulus plan that invests in America, rather than in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats are serious about working in a bipartisan fashion to turn this economy around, and the best way to do that is to prioritize the needs of hardworking, middle-class Americans.

INCREASING SUPPLY TO LOWER GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, it is really simple: If you want to help rural small town poor individuals in this country, we have to get the price of gas down. Here is the problem: January 2001, the price of a barrel of crude oil was $23. When this majority came in, it was $58. Now it is $134. What does that translate into? From $1.45 to $2.23 to $4.07. Add climate change, 50 cents additional. $4.55, if you calculate climate change.

What is the solution? The solution is all of the above. Outer Continental Shelf exploration and recovery, coal-to-liquid technologies, solar and wind, renewable fuels. We need to do all the above, and you all need to help us.

We need to bring a bill to the floor that brings on more supply. We are willing to work with you. More supply is the only thing that we can do to bring down the cost of fuel which will help middle- and low-income Americans. We ask you to join us.

MISTAKES MADE IN AIR FORCE TANKER CONTRACT

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last week it was revealed that the Air Force made a serious mistake in comparing the costs of tanker aircraft proposals offered by Northrop Grumman/Airbus and Boeing.

When the Air Force awarded this $40 billion contract to Northrop Grumman/Airbus, it repeatedly said that the cost of the two planes was one of their top selection criteria. However this latest revelation, supported by both companies, undercuts the Air Force's assertion that they picked the most cost-effective aircraft and casts doubt on whether the two planes were evaluated fairly on the other criteria.

Take, for example, fuel usage. The Airbus tanker uses 24 percent more fuel than Boeing, about 400 gallons more per hour, and over 2 billion gallons of fuel each year. Yet the Air Force continues to claim that the Airbus tanker is the best value over the long term.

At a time of soaring fuel costs that calls into question whether the most cost-effective choice was made for our taxpayers and our airmen for a plane with a lifespan of 40 years, the selection of tanker aircraft will have far-reaching implications for our Nation's industrial base and our security. The Air Force must get it right and rebid this critical decision.

DRILL NOTHING CONGRESS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Drill Nothing Congress is still determined to drive the price of gasoline up by not allowing offshore drilling for crude oil and natural gas.

Americans think we are held hostage by OPEC and dictator Chavez for our crude oil, but the real culprit is Congress. Congress holds the keys to freedom from OPEC and the little dictator, but will not unlock the big door to independence.

Congress should lift the offshore drilling ban in the Gulf coast, the east coast and even the sacred west coast. Then let each State and its people decide whether or not to drill off their shores.

Congress should let States receive a portion of the oil lease revenues oil companies pay Uncle Sam for the privilege to drill and States to use this additional revenue to fund education or whatever they wish.

The Drill Nothing Congress seems to want gasoline prices to continue to rise to punish Americans for driving gasoline-powered vehicles. Congress is the problem. In the court of American public opinion, Congress is wrong for its hardheaded, absurd policy of don't drill in America. Meanwhile, gasoline continues to rise in price.

And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS TAKE ACTION ON RECORD HIGH GAS PRICES

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, record high gas prices are forcing most American families to make some tough decisions this summer. While prices remain around $4 a gallon, some families have to decide if they should take that planned summer vacation or not, while others are trying to determine what normal everyday drives can be eliminated because they simply cannot afford it.

This Democratic Congress recognizes the financial hardship these record prices are creating for everyone. That is why we have passed seven bills in the last couple of months to help lower prices.

We passed legislation in a strong, bipartisan fashion suspending sending more oil to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve until the end of the year, which will result in a 25 cents a gallon price reduction in July. We also passed legislation holding OPEC and big oil accountable for price fixing and cracking down on oil companies engaged in market manipulation.

Mr. Speaker, as Americans face continued pain at the pump, we should work in a strong bipartisan fashion to pass commonsense legislation that provides some immediate relief.

LISTENING TO CONSTITUENTS ON ENERGY PRICE INCREASES

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

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, as Congress continues its debate on domestic energy policy, we must be aware of what our constituents are saying, both at home and at work.

During this past week, I had the pleasure of touring two manufacturing plants in my district. These plants provide hundreds of good-paying jobs and produce high-quality products for our Nation's economy. During my tours, the management of these companies said that hands down, rising energy costs are their number one concern.

As energy costs rise, production costs rise as well at these plants. As production costs rise, companies all over the United States face competition from foreign manufacturers who have lower labor costs and, in some instances, lower fuel costs. Countries like China and India, who are currently exploring

many forms of domestic energy production, are able to offer lower production costs directly tied to their lower energy costs.

Under the current congressional leadership, Congress will not even consider domestic exploration and recovery of an abundance of energy resources that we have here in the United States. With these energy resources, we can grow our own economy, retain American jobs and prevent them from being taken overseas.

The bottom line is that energy equals manufacturing which equals jobs, and we in Congress must remember that as our energy debate continues.

NO BAN EXISTS ON OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, there is no ban on offshore oil drilling. In fact, there are 33.5 million acres offshore leased to the oil industry from which they are extracting nothing and they are not developing. They say, well, they don't have the drill bits or they don't have the time or whatever. The Republicans say they need more leases.

They don't need more leases. They need to develop what is out there, plain and simple. Think of the former Naval Petroleum Reserve. It is right up there in Alaska next to ANWR, 13.4 billion barrels of known reserves, drilled and capped by the oil industry, leased by Bill Clinton, not producing a single drop.

But, oh, let's go to ANWR. There might be some there.

Come on, guys. They are not developing what they have now. There is a 20-year supply out there underneath their idle leases that could double our domestic production, and, plain and simple, they haven't developed it. Then when they are done with that, then we can have a debate about more leasing in other places.

TIME TO START UTILIZING AMERICAN ENERGY RESOURCES

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to a lot of rhetoric on the other side about it is time for a change in America. I agree. It is time for the Democrats to change their votes and stop voting against producing energy that belongs to Americans.

One of the things that we do every morning, and we got the opportunity this morning, is to write Hugo Chavez another check for $170 million. We wrote one yesterday, and we will write one tomorrow. Just think of what we could do with $170 million, investing it right here in American jobs.

When we bring up ANWR, 86 percent of the Democrats voted against that. When we bring up coal-to-liquid technology, 78 percent of the Democrats voted against that. When we bring up developing oil shale exploration, 86 percent of the Democrats voted against that. The Outer Continental Shelf, 83 percent of the Democrats voted against that. Refinery capacity, we are importing gasoline into this country, 96 percent of the Democrats are opposed to that.

It is time for change. It is time to start producing American resources.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD FOR ECONOMY

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, nearly one in five unemployed Americans have lost their unemployment benefits because it has taken them longer than 26 weeks to find a new job. Obviously, most companies are laying off. Imagine not having a job, losing unemployment benefits, and then trying to pay for gas at the pump and food at the grocery store.

This Democratic Congress knows it is tougher to find a job when the economy is not producing them. That is why we passed legislation last week giving these workers an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits.

In my home State of Texas, there are more than 45,000 workers who have already exhausted their unemployment insurance and 115,000 more that are expected to exhaust their benefits by March of next year. This legislation would help all of these people. But President Bush and his Republican allies here in the House oppose our efforts, even though the President supported a similar extension back in 2002 when the economic situation is not nearly as bad as it is now.

Mr. Speaker, millions of American workers need help from this Congress today. Washington Republicans should reconsider their opposition to this important legislation.

□ 1015

BROADCASTER FREEDOM ACT

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the American people cherish freedom. That's why President Reagan repealed the so-called Fairness Doctrine back in 1987 that actually regulated the content of radio airwaves for more than four decades.

Today, while some of the most powerful Democrats in Congress make plans to restore this Depression-era regulation, Republicans have taken action. We introduced the Broadcaster Freedom Act that would take the power to restore the Fairness Doctrine away from this or any future President, and we filed a discharge petition to force an up or down vote. But in 245 days, not one single House Democrat has signed the discharge petition for broadcast freedom.

I offer my Democrat colleagues this respectful challenge. If you cherish freedom, you cherish the freedom of the press. If you cherish the airwaves of America, left, right and center, let's make this Fourth of July Radio Independence Day.

Sign the discharge petition for broadcast freedom by Independence Day.

AIR FORCE TANKER DECISION

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, the GAO is scheduled this week to decide whether or not to overturn the Air Force decision on awarding the tanker contract to Airbus. We have already heard this morning that the Air Force has discovered that they made numerous mistakes in how they calculated the cost.

There is another huge issue. We hope the GAO does the right thing and overturns that decision, but even if they don't, we have to keep in mind that our country has a trade action against Airbus right now for unfairly and illegally subsidizing their products, the very product that the Air Force has decided to buy.

If we want to enforce our trade laws against our trading partners to our advantage, it makes no sense whatsoever to reward precisely the illegal, unfair behavior that we are trying to stop them from doing. Giving them this contract does that, and we should overturn it either by the GAO or by Congress if they don't and not reward unfair subsidization by our foreign competitors.

GAS PRICES

(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, Americans are fed up paying over $4 per gallon for gas and nearly $5 for diesel. The price of a gallon of gas has spiked $2 since Democrats took control of Congress in January of 2007.

It's high time we did something about the skyrocketing cost of gasoline and allow us to explore for oil right here in America. To bring down the price of gasoline, we need to expand U.S. refinery capacity, tap America's own energy resources, streamline the number of fuel blends and promote the use of clean, alternative energy. With a nationwide price for gasoline now over $4 a gallon, it's no surprise a recent Gallup Poll showed 57 percent of Americans now favor further exploration for oil right here in America. These folks are right.

Come on, America, let's strike oil.

REPUBLICANS CONTINUE TO SUPPORT BUSH ON FAILING POLICIES—WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO LEARN?

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, just how long are congressional Republicans going to follow President Bush's lead? Thanks to 7 years of Bush policies, Americans are facing skyrocketing costs for basic necessities. Millions of families have lost their homes, unemployment is rising, and 7 million more Americans are uninsured.

You would think any one of these statistics would send congressional Republicans looking for a different solution. Instead, it appears a plan to blindly follow until the finish.

When the President vetoed a bipartisan bill that would provide health coverage to 10 million children, House Republicans stood with President Bush twice in supporting his veto. When the President vetoed legislation for stem cell research that could lead to cures for diseases such as diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer's, House Republicans once again stood by President Bush and upheld his veto. Then last week a majority of Republicans refused to provide relief to 3.8 million Americans who are struggling to find new jobs.

When are congressional Republicans going to realize that following President Bush is not the answer?

SHOW US AN ENERGY PLAN

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, enough is enough.

Last week in my district in South Carolina I had a man approach me, said he wanted some help with gas prices. He is making $325 a week, and he spends $80 to $90 of it on gas, almost 30 percent of his paycheck going into his tank.

What kind of leadership is this? What kind of energy plan is this?

When is the majority going to wake up and realize it's their constituents that are having problems with gas prices? When are they going to show us their energy plan, or do they even have one? The Republicans have one, and it will bring down gas prices by 50 percent. It's time Congress takes action. We need to do this for America, for our constituents and for our national security.

Bring a plan to the floor to make us all stronger. Someone needs to lead this show.

PLAN FOR ENERGY

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I listen to my friends on the other side of the aisle and they ask, what's the Democrats' plan for energy? Well, with two oilmen in the White House, it's obvious what the Republicans' plan has been, and it has been a constant increase in the price of gas since the day George Bush and DICK CHENEY took office.

There are 68 million acres under lease for oil production not being used, being hoarded, being kept out of the market. It's a red herring to say we need to drill more. It's available. What we really need to do is get off the addiction to oil.

We have learned this lesson before. We don't need to keep learning it. We need to have research and development in new ways to power this Nation.

At the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado, with just tweaking the battery of a Prius, the lab reached 100 miles to the gallon. We can no longer be dependent on the Middle East for oil production. We have to change this Nation and its energy plans. To do so is good for national security, good for the climate and good for jobs.

We have to change the direction of this Nation.

HIGH GAS PRICES

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak for all the hardworking people in east Alabama who are getting swamped by high gas prices. Each of us in this Chamber knows that gas is over $5 a gallon in this country and rising. We all know that high gas prices are making everything more expensive, from groceries to clothing.

The question is what is this House going to do about it? For one, we should vote this week to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for energy exploration. We should also open the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico.

Combined, these two locations have the potential of providing our country almost 100 billion barrels of oil. In addition, Congress must get serious about funding alternative energy research. A great example is the work being done at Auburn University in my home State of Alabama. I would like to invite my colleagues to visit the Auburn mobile bioenergy unit here in D.C. this week.

Efforts like these are critical or a critical part of the solution to high gas prices, but so is using the resources we have here at home in an environmentally sensitive way. This is just common sense, and there is nothing that should stop Congress from following this course.

COMMEMORATING THE SERVICE OF SUPERINTENDENT SANDRA BARRY TO THE ANAHEIM CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the service of Anaheim City School District Superintendent Sandra Barry and to wish her luck in her upcoming retirement.

Throughout her 11 years with the school district, including the last 8 as superintendent, Mrs. Barry has done an excellent job leading the Anaheim City School District, which is the largest elementary school district in Orange County and one of the largest in the State of California.

I applaud Superintendent Barry's commitment to the entire Anaheim community. Mrs. Barry has given her time and energy to many causes, including being on the board of directors for the Tiger Woods Foundation, the Anaheim Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA and the Police Chief Community Advisory Board. Her dedication to the community and the future of our Anaheim children is clear through her many achievements.

I sincerely thank superintendent Barry for her leadership, her commitment and her dedication to brightening the academic future of every Anaheim elementary student. She will be missed, but her lasting influence, and especially with respect to all the educators in the district, will go on for a long time in Anaheim.

I wish my good friend the best in her retirement, and I thank her for making the Anaheim City School District a great place to learn.

REDUCE OUR RELIANCE ON FOREIGN OIL

(Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say that we need to reduce our reliance on foreign oil. I couldn't agree more.

The Democrats are good at making promises, but they need to follow through on those promises. There is one thing my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are very good at saying—''no.''

It seems like every option we put on the table, whether it's developing the sources of the Outer Continental Shelf, expansion of nuclear power, or opening more refineries in the United States, the answer is always no.

The Department of Interior estimates that in the Outer Continental Shelf alone, there is almost 100 billion barrels of oil and over 450 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. How high will gas prices have to go before the Democrats

start saying ''yes''? $5 a gallon? $10 a gallon?

It's time for no more excuses. Families are hurting. Businesses are hurting. The American people are asking for help. It's time to say ''yes.''

REPUBLICAN PLAN OF DRILLING IN ANWR IS NOT THE ANSWER TO HIGH GAS PRICES

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, the American people are rightfully concerned about the high cost of gas, and they are looking for solutions that will provide some immediate relief. We don't need more of the stale rhetoric of the past 7 years that we have heard from the Bush administration and their so-called energy policy.

President Bush and congressional Republicans continue to argue that opening one of America's treasures, the Arctic refuge, to oil drilling will lower gas prices. That's simply not true.

Ask the experts. That is the conclusion of the Bush administration's own Energy Information Administration, which estimates that opening the Arctic refuge to drilling today will save only a few pennies a gallon 20 years from now. Sadly, this is the Republican solution to addressing the high prices that they created.

The American people are looking for action. That's exactly what this Democratic House has been doing over the past couple of months. Unfortunately, we need help from our friends across the aisle because President Bush remains committed to failed policies.

SUPPORT GROWING DOMESTIC ENERGY NEEDS

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, an 83-year-old woman told me she is paying over $400 a month now for her energy bills, and she may end up finishing her life burning wood, like she started it.

The fact is, God has blessed this Nation with an abundance of solutions in the form of natural resources that can support growing domestic energy needs. Within 3 years, we can get a million to a million and a half barrels of oil from ANWR. Some have indicated there are three times the amount of oil left in the entire Middle East, three times that amount in shale in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, but they can't get to it.

The limited areas that are available for lease have an 8-year lease, and they are saying it takes right at 8 years to get all the permits. Yes, there is some property under lease that they can't produce. There is some that doesn't produce. That's the energy business.

But we need to help hardworking Americans. I don't understand what the majority leadership has against good union jobs. We are losing them every day in our district because energy prices are too high, and I want to keep those good union jobs.

□ 1030

JOBLESS BENEFITS EXTENSION

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, there is hardly a middle-class soul in our country who has not been impacted by this terrible economy. With 326,000 jobs lost, millions of Americans may lose their homes and their health care. All this as the price of food soars and the price of gas passes $4 a gallon and wages are stagnant.

Mr. Speaker, we should invent a new word similar to stagflation that also includes gas and food. May I suggest ''stagasfoodlation'' to describe this terrible economy. Millions of men, women and children are caught up in an economic perfect storm not of their making where every avenue seems cut off.

Today we will have the opportunity to vote for an extension of unemployment insurance to help these American families. Republicans should not try to block this last lifeline for these families.

ESCALATING GAS PRICES

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to those urging change in the face of escalating gas prices. With the start of the summer season, the far-reaching effects of ever increasing gas prices is becoming more and more apparent.

It will result in a decrease in income for those in the travel industry, and that will lead to an increase in prices for dependent goods. As a result, the national economy will experience lower spending and higher prices. We are not now in a terrible economic situation, as some of our colleagues have said, but the high gas prices can lead to that.

Yet in the face of this self-perpetuating cycle, Democrats are not fighting for change here. We need to move our energy production technologies into the 21st century and build more coal, hydroelectric, and nuclear plants. We have ways to increase our domestic oil and gas production, as well as renewable and domestically available energy sources. At the same time, we must support the commercialization of our shale oil resources which hold enough oil to meet America's needs for more than two centuries.

Congress cannot afford to stand as an idle spectator as gas prices continue to erode the foundation of our economy. I urge Members to support Republican efforts to actively seek solutions to our current situation. American families deserve results and it is our responsibility to see that they get them.

EXTENDING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, the Bush economy has lost nearly 325,000 jobs this year alone. With five straight months of job losses and the unemployment rate experiencing its sharpest spike in 22 years, it is clear that the economic downturn is hurting middle class people everywhere.

Last week, the Democratic Congress passed legislation to extend unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks to provide relief to millions of Americans who are finding it increasingly difficult to find a job.

Not only will this extension help 1.6 million Americans who have already exhausted their regular benefits, but it will also stimulate the struggling economy. For every $1 spent on unemployment benefits, it generates $1.64 in our economy.

Mr. Speaker, after last week's bipartisan vote, President Bush and the majority of the House Republicans should drop their opposition to this commonsense legislation so we can provide some much-needed assistance to those who are hurting under the Bush economy. Workers who are having trouble finding a job are not to be blamed for this struggling economy.

AMERICA NEEDS ENERGY PRODUCTION

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, you know after listening to my friends on the other side of the aisle, if you listen to their prescription for our energy woes, it is very much like saying we can have milk in this country without cows. They don't understand that in order to take care of the problem, you need supply.

And why do I say that, because on every single vote we have had over the last decade or so, when we talked about tar sands, Democrats voted no. When we talked about shale oil, Democrats voted no. When we talked about coal, Democrats voted no. When we talked about cleaner ways of using coal, the Democrats voted no. When we talked about offshore drilling for gas and oil, the Democrats said no. When we talked about drilling in ANWR, they voted no. When we talked about refineries, they said no. Nuclear, they said no. And sometimes they have even said no to wind if it happened to be near where they lived.

Now the problem is that the American people want solutions. We are providing an opportunity for solutions. All

we are asking is that the leadership on the Democratic side of the aisle allow us to bring to the floor those bills that will allow for more American energy production because we understand if you want milk, you have to have cows. If you want production, you are going to have to allow production in this country.

DOLLAR LITE UNDER PRESIDENT BUSH

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, the people in Wisconsin elected me and sent me here to Washington to listen to them. And what are the people in Wisconsin asking me to do? They said Kagen, there are two things you can do to help me and stimulate my economy and put more money in my pocket: cut the price of gasoline and reduce our health care costs.

As Megan and Eric from Appleton wrote to me, ''We are young people with four kids. Our insurance is out of control. Our family earns $38,000 a year. We pay $520 a month to have health insurance. Gas prices limit our lives. We can't afford it; food for our kids or gas in the tank.''

My friends, there are two reasons we are in this mess: Bush and CHENEY. Bush and CHENEY, these are the two reasons. And what have they done, they have taken our United States dollar and taken down its value. You might be drinking Miller Lite, but you've got dollar lite in your pocket, and that's why the price of everything, from gasoline to health care, to food, shelter and clothing is going up. Your United States dollar isn't worth what it was when George Bush took office.

TANKER CONTRACT DECISION BAD FOR AMERICAN ECONOMY

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

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, the Air Force's recent decision to award a contract to Airbus to replace our current fleet of aerial refueling tankers is a reckless one. Americans are experiencing job cuts, a credit crisis, foreclosures on their homes, and rising foods and energy prices.

Just weeks after this Congress passed a $168 billion economic stimulus package to address these issues, the Air Force assumes it will simply appropriate $40 billion for an Airbus fleet of tankers, creating high-paying jobs in Europe.

American workers have built and provided our tanker fleet for more than 40 years. Their experience makes them second to none when it comes to meeting this need.

It is beyond belief that the Air Force will reward American know-how and hard work by offshoring defense-related jobs and shrinking the U.S. industrial base even further. This decision is not in the interests of the United States.

I urge my colleagues to see the larger picture here. Congress has a responsibility to look out for all of the issues pertaining to this contract and the threat it poses to American workers.

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 later.

AMENDING CERTAIN LAWS RELATING TO NATIVE AMERICANS

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5680) to amend certain laws relating to Native Americans, and for others purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5680

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

SECTION 1. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Table of contents.
Sec. 2. Colorado River Indian Tribes.
Sec. 3. Gila River Indian Community contracts.
Sec. 4. Land and interests of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan.
Sec. 5. Morongo Band of Mission Indians Lease Extension.
Sec. 6. Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians leasing authority.
Sec. 7. New Settlement Common Stock issued to descendants, left-outs, and elders.

SEC. 2. COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES.

The Secretary of the Interior may make, subject to amounts provided in subsequent appropriations Acts, an annual disbursement to the Colorado River Indian Tribes. Funds disbursed under this section shall be used to fund the Office of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation Energy Development and shall not be less than $200,000 and not to exceed $350,000 annually.

SEC. 3. GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY CONTRACTS.

Subsection (f) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415(f)), is amended by striking ''lease, affecting'' and inserting ''lease or construction contract, affecting''.

SEC. 4. LAND AND INTERESTS OF THE SAULT STE. MARIE TRIBE OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS OF MICHIGAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsections (b) and (c), notwithstanding any other provision of law (including regulations), the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan (including any agent or instrumentality of the Tribe) (referred to in this section as the ''Tribe''), may transfer, lease, encumber, or otherwise convey, without further authorization or approval, all or any part of the Tribe's interest in any real property that is not held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe.

(b) EFFECT OF SECTION.—Nothing in this section is intended to authorize the Tribe to transfer, lease, encumber, or otherwise convey, any lands, or any interest in any lands, that are held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe.

(c) LIABILITY.—The United States shall not be held liable to any party (including the Tribe or any agent or instrumentality of the Tribe) for any term of, or any loss resulting from the term of any transfer, lease, encumbrance, or conveyance of land made pursuant to this Act unless the United States or an agent or instrumentality of the United States is a party to the transaction or the United States would be liable pursuant to any other provision of law. This subsection shall not apply to land transferred or conveyed by the Tribe to the United States to be held in trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall be deemed to have taken effect on January 1, 2005.

SEC. 5. MORONGO BAND OF MISSION INDIANS LEASE EXTENSION.

Subsection (a) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415(a)) is amended in the second sentence by inserting ''and except leases of land held in trust for the Morongo Band of Mission Indians which may be for a term of not to exceed 50 years,'' before ''and except leases of land for grazing purposes which may be for a term of not to exceed ten years''.

SEC. 6. COW CREEK BAND OF UMPQUA TRIBE OF INDIANS LEASING AUTHORITY.

(a) AUTHORIZATION FOR 99-YEAR LEASES.—Subsection (a) of the first section of the Act of August 9, 1955 (25 U.S.C. 415(a)), is amended in the second sentence by inserting ''and lands held in trust for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians,'' after ''lands held in trust for the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon,''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to any lease entered into or renewed after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 7. NEW SETTLEMENT COMMON STOCK ISSUED TO DESCENDANTS, LEFT-OUTS, AND ELDERS.

Section 7 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, (Public Law 92–203; 85 Stat. 691), is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (g)(1)(B)(iii) (43 U.S.C. 1606(g)(1)(B)(iii)), to read as follows:

''(iii) The amendment authorized by clause (i) may provide that Settlement Common Stock issued to a Native pursuant to such amendment (or stock issued in exchange for such Settlement Common Stock pursuant to subsection (h)(3) of this section or section 1626c(d) of this title) shall be subject to one or more of the following:

''(I) Such stock shall be deemed canceled upon the death of such Native, and no compensation for this cancellation shall be paid to the estate of the deceased Native or to any person holding stock.

''(II) Such stock shall carry limited or no voting rights.

''(III) Such stock shall not be transferred by gift as provided in subparagraph (h)(1)(C)(iii).''; and

(2) in subsection (h)(1)(C) (43 U.S.C. 1606(h)(1)(C)), by striking ''Notwithstanding the restrictions'' and inserting ''Expect as otherwise expressly provided in this chapter and''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. 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 bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5680, introduced by our colleague, Mr. GRIJALVA, contains multiple proposals to address the needs of several Indian tribes and Alaska Native villages. I would like to commend Mr. GRIJALVA for his hard work on this legislation. Without his dedication and commitment, we would not be here this morning. Some of these provisions may seem small and insignificant, but they mean much to those they affect.

Under this legislation, the Colorado River Indian Tribes would be authorized to receive funds from the Secretary of the Interior in order to establish and run an Office of Energy Development. Funds are available for such purposes under section 1(b) of the Act of June 1938. The establishment of an Office of Energy Development will allow the tribe to better oversee and manage the operation, management and funds derived from the BIA power system located on their reservation.

This legislation would authorize the Gila River Indian Community to agree to mediation over construction contracts. It supports the right of an Indian tribe to dispose of land held in fee simple status. It further authorizes two Indian tribes to enter into long term leasing of tribal land. Finally, this legislation clarifies certain powers of Alaskan Native Regional Corporations with respect to the issuance of common stock.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 5680, as amended.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

H.R. 5680 is a technical corrections bill amending several laws concerning Native Americans. This bill has six substantive sections that will increase tribal economic development in several western States, Michigan and also Alaska. The bill is supported by the administration, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

I must add, of course, that opening up American reserves of oil, natural gas, geothermal energy and oil shale here at home would also help economic development, not only for Native Americans, but for all Americans.

Rather than devoting precious hours to legislation that covers a multitude of topics, and I understand many of them are necessary, others are more discretionary, I would ask, I would plead in fact as a member of the minority, that the leadership allow us the opportunity to vote on bills that would address the shortage of energy supply in our country.

I will say that no single answer remains to solve our energy situation. That is why I believe so many sources of energy need to be on the table. We have heard various criticisms and various analogies, but the fact is that we need more energy supply. The economics point to that. The demands of our economy point to that. The checkbooks of every single American point to that. Households all across America, all across our economy need more access, more affordable access to energy.

Congress ought not point a finger at those folks who they think use too much energy. Certainly I would not tell a farmer or rancher in my district of Nebraska they are caught up in consuming too much energy in producing food for America, or feed stocks for alternative energy. It takes energy to produce energy. Yes, I understand that, and we can do better with our policies.

I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5680, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend certain laws relating to Native Americans, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FAIR, ACCURATE, SECURE, AND TIMELY REDRESS ACT OF 2008

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4179) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish an appeal and redress process for individuals wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4179

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 ''Fair, Accurate, Secure, and Timely Redress Act of 2008'' or the ''FAST Redress Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF APPEAL AND REDRESS PROCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WRONGLY DELAYED OR PROHIBITED FROM BOARDING A FLIGHT, OR DENIED A RIGHT, BENEFIT, OR PRIVILEGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle H of title VIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 451 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 890A. APPEAL AND REDRESS PROCESS FOR PASSENGERS WRONGLY DELAYED OR PROHIBITED FROM BOARDING A FLIGHT, OR DENIED A RIGHT, BENEFIT, OR PRIVILEGE.

''(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall establish a timely and fair process for individuals who believe they were delayed or prohibited from boarding a commercial aircraft or denied a right, benefit, or privilege because they were wrongly identified as a threat when screened against any terrorist watchlist or database used by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) or any office or component of the Department.

''(b) OFFICE OF APPEALS AND REDRESS.—

''(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish in the Department an Office of Appeals and Redress to implement, coordinate, and execute the process established by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a). The Office shall include representatives from the TSA and such other offices and components of the Department as the Secretary determines appropriate.

''(2) COMPREHENSIVE CLEARED LIST.—The process established by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) shall include the establishment of a method by which the Office, under the direction of the Secretary, will maintain and appropriately disseminate a comprehensive list, to be known as the 'Comprehensive Cleared List', of individuals who—

''(A) were misidentified as an individual on any terrorist watchlist or database;

''(B) completed an approved Department of Homeland Security appeal and redress request and provided such additional information as required by the Department to verify the individual's identity; and

''(C) permit the use of their personally identifiable information to be shared between multiple Departmental components for purposes of this section.

''(3) USE OF COMPREHENSIVE CLEARED LIST.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

''(i) except as provided in subparagraph (B), transmit to the TSA or any other appropriate office or component of the Department, other Federal, State, local, and tribal entities, and domestic air carriers and foreign air carriers that use any terrorist watchlist or database, the Comprehensive Cleared List and any other information the Secretary determines necessary to resolve misidentifications and improve the administration of the advanced passenger prescreening system and reduce the number of false positives; and

''(ii) ensure that the Comprehensive Cleared List is taken into account by all appropriate offices or components of the Department when assessing the security risk of an individual.

''(B) TERMINATION.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The transmission of the Comprehensive Cleared List to domestic air carriers and foreign air carriers under clause (i) of subparagraph (A) shall terminate on the date on which the Federal Government assumes terrorist watchlist or database screening functions.

''(ii) WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 15 days after the date on which the transmission of the Comprehensive Cleared List to the air carriers referred to in clause (i) of this subparagraph terminates in accordance with such clause, the Secretary shall provide written notification to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate of such termination.

''(4) INTERGOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS.—The Secretary may—

''(A) enter into memoranda of understanding with other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies or entities, as necessary, to improve the appeal and redress process and for other purposes such as to verify an individual's identity and personally identifiable information; and

''(B) work with other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies or entities that use any terrorist watchlist or database to ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that the Comprehensive Cleared List is considered when assessing the security risk of an individual.

''(5) HANDLING OF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION.—The Secretary, in conjunction with the Chief Privacy Officer of the Department, shall—

''(A) require that Federal employees of the Department handling personally identifiable information of individuals (in this paragraph referred to as 'PII') complete mandatory privacy and security training prior to being authorized to handle PII;

''(B) ensure that the information maintained under this subsection is secured by encryption, including one-way hashing, data anonymization techniques, or such other equivalent technical security protections as the Secretary determines necessary;

''(C) limit the information collected from misidentified passengers or other individuals to the minimum amount necessary to resolve an appeal and redress request;

''(D) ensure that the information maintained under this subsection is shared or transferred via an encrypted data network that has been audited to ensure that the anti-hacking and other security related software functions perform properly and are updated as necessary;

''(E) ensure that any employee of the Department receiving the information maintained under this subsection handles such information in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code, the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–296), and other applicable laws;

''(F) only retain the information maintained under this subsection for as long as needed to assist the individual traveler in the appeal and redress process;

''(G) engage in cooperative agreements with appropriate Federal agencies and entities, on a reimbursable basis, to ensure that legal name changes are properly reflected in any terrorist watchlist or database and the Comprehensive Cleared List to improve the appeal and redress process and to ensure the most accurate lists of identifications possible (except that section 552a of title 5, United States Code, shall not prohibit the sharing of legal name changes among Federal agencies and entities for the purposes of this section); and

''(H) conduct and publish a privacy impact assessment of the appeal and redress process established under this section and transmit the assessment to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

''(6) INITIATION OF APPEAL AND REDRESS PROCESS AT AIRPORTS.—At each airport at which—

''(A) the Department has a presence, the Office shall provide written information to air carrier passengers to begin the appeal and redress process established pursuant to subsection (a); and

''(B) the Department has a significant presence, provide the written information referred to in subparagraph (A) and ensure a TSA supervisor who is trained in such appeal and redress process is available to provide support to air carrier passengers in need of guidance concerning such process.

''(7) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 240 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on the status of information sharing among users at the Department of any terrorist watchlist or database. The report shall include the following information:

''(A) A description of the processes and the status of the implementation of this section to share the Comprehensive Cleared List with other Department offices and components and other Federal, State, local, and tribal authorities that utilize any terrorist watchlist or database.

''(B) A description of the extent to which such other Department offices and components are taking into account the Comprehensive Cleared List.

''(C) Data on the number of individuals who have sought and successfully obtained redress through the Office of Appeals and Redress.

''(D) Data on the number of individuals who have sought and were denied redress through the Office of Appeals and Redress.

''(E) An assessment of what impact information sharing of the Comprehensive Cleared List has had on misidentifications of individuals who have successfully obtained redress through the Office of Appeals and Redress.

''(F) An updated privacy impact assessment.

''(c) TERRORIST WATCHLIST OR DATABASE DEFINED.—In this section, the term 'terrorist watchlist or database' means any terrorist watchlist or database used by the Transportation Security Administration or any office or component of the Department of Homeland Security or specified in Homeland Security Presidential Directive-6, in effect as of the date of the enactment of this section.''.

(b) INCORPORATION OF SECURE FLIGHT.—Section 44903(j)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C)(iii)—

(A) by redesignating subclauses (II) through (VII) as subclauses (III) through (VIII), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after subclause (I) the following new subclause:

''(II) ensure, not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of the FAST Redress Act of 2008, that the procedure established under subclause (I) is incorporated into the appeals and redress process established under section 890A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002;'';

(2) in subparagraph (E)(iii), by inserting before the period at the end the following: '', in accordance with the appeals and redress process established under section 890A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002''; and

(3) in subparagraph (G)—

(A) in clause (i), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The Assistant Secretary shall incorporate the process established pursuant to this clause into the appeals and redress process established under section 890A of the Homeland Security Act of 2002.''; and

(B) in clause (ii), by adding at the end the following new sentence: ''The Assistant Secretary shall incorporate the record established and maintained pursuant to this clause into the Comprehensive Cleared List established and maintained under such section 890A.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking section 44926 (and the item relating to such section in the analysis for chapter 449 of title 49).

(d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101(b)) is amended by adding after the item relating to section 890 the following new item:

''Sec. 890A. Appeal and redress process for passengers wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight, or denied a right, benefit, or privilege.'.'

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4179, the Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely Redress Act or FAST Redress Act was introduced last year by a relatively new member of the Homeland Security Committee, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE. Representative CLARKE is to be commended for the yeoman's job she has done.

Everyone complains about the lack of sanity in the watch-listing process, but few have dared to wade into all the ins and outs of the system. Representative CLARKE has done just that, and this legislation is the product of that thoughtful undertaking.

H.R. 4179 was marked up and approved on a bipartisan basis by the committees's Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee in early May. On May 20, 2008, the bill was marked up and adopted unanimously by the full committee.

This legislation, like other Homeland Security Committee bills that will be considered today, builds on the solid provisions in H.R. 1684, the Department of Homeland Security authorization bill that has been pending in the Senate since May of 2007.

Certainly, the practice of watch-listing individuals plays an important role in identifying possible terrorist suspects.

□ 1045

It is important to keep in mind that the watch list is only as good as the information on it. Without accurate, complete and reliable information, the purpose of the watch list is frustrated, the database becomes unreliable, and misidentifications persist.

Getting the watch list fixed and reducing misidentifications is a particularly difficult challenge. To do so, all the intelligence and law enforcement components that populate the list would need to come together and agree to clean it up. Unfortunately, this has not happened. Therefore, redress is the only real recourse for an American who is repeatedly stopped or delayed at airports and border crossings because one is misidentified as a terrorist threat.

Presently, there is a redress process available at DHS. Since February 2007, over 32,000 Americans have sought redress through DHS Traveler and Redress Inquiry Program, also known as DHS TRIP. Each individual voluntarily provided personal information to establish their identity. When there is a determination that this person is not a

threat, their names are placed on a ''cleared list'' that is maintained by the Transportation Security Administration.

This cleared list is populated with names of individuals who have the same or similar name as someone on the ''no fly'' or ''selectee'' lists, but have proven that they are not the person on the list. The cleared list is then shared with only the airlines for screening purposes.

Under H.R. 4179, it will be shared throughout DHS and with other Federal agencies that use the terrorist watch list database. This would assure that individuals that go through the redress process are not stopped as potential terrorists by other Federal agencies.

Specifically, H.R. 4179 requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish the Office of Appeals and Redress to provide a timely and fair redress process. The Office of Appeals and Redress is directed to maintain a ''comprehensive cleared list'' that contains the names of individuals who have been misidentified and have corrected erroneous information.

The comprehensive cleared list would be made available to other Federal, State, local and Tribal authorities and others that use the terrorist watch list or database to resolve misidentification.

The bill directs TSA, CBP, the Coast Guard and other DHS components to reference the comprehensive cleared list when assessing the security risk of an individual. This would assure that individuals like our esteemed colleague, the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. JOHN LEWIS, would not be repeatedly stopped or delayed or have to seek redress from components in the same Federal agency.

H.R. 4179 also authorizes the DHS to enter into memoranda of understanding with other Federal agencies to enhance the redress process.

Importantly, the measure includes protections to assure that personally identifiable information is handled in accordance with privacy laws.

Once enacted, individuals that go through the trouble of clearing their names will not have to repeat the exercise again and again and again.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of every John Lewis and James Smith, I urge passage of this bill.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I want to thank the chairman of the committee for granting me the time, and also for the work that he has done in working on a bipartisan basis with those of us on this side to bring a number of these bills to the floor.

Every month, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government and local law enforcement officials screen some 270 million individuals against a new and constantly evolving consolidated terrorist watch list, we actually are safer as a result of those actions. Since the Terrorist Screening Center's establishment in December of 2003, front line screeners using this watch list have encountered known or reasonably suspected terrorists over 55,000 times.

Now, I grant you that a name-based watch list certainly is not perfect. The problems are compounded by the fact that, in several cases, a single individual has over 50 identities on the watch list and, of course, this would eventually lead to misidentifications between law-abiding Americans and watch-listed identities.

These misidentifications are not simply persons with Arab names, as the press would have you believe. Actors, writers, yes, even as the gentleman from Mississippi mentioned, Congressmen and sometimes even former Presidential candidates have been inconvenienced by the terrorist watch list.

However, the bottom line is that the watch list stops would-be terrorists from entering the United States. According to Customs and Border Protection, on March 27, 2005, a CBP officer identified an individual who was a possible match to terrorist-related records. The ID resulted in a local joint terrorism task force arresting the passenger, who was later charged with conspiring to provide material support to terrorism and conspiracy to kill, kidnap, or maim persons.

Similarly, CBP denied entry of a Palestine Liberation Organization weapons smuggler. The suspect was later charged with conspiracy to traffic in explosive devices and firearms.

The legislation before us today, introduced by the gentlelady from New York, is a good bill. It's the result of solid bipartisan negotiations, and I wish to thank her and her staff, as well as the chairman of the committee and the chairwoman of the subcommittee and their staffs, for working with us to develop a reasonable process to ensure that individuals who are frequently misidentified have an effective recourse to minimize future travel disruption.

Perhaps one of the most important provisions of the bill is the requirement that the Department of Homeland Security better advertise its redress process, known as TRIP, at airports.

When I hear from constituents that they're being misidentified as a watch-listed individual, I'm concerned they have not heard of the Department's process to seek redress. This bill requires the Department to advertise its redress process at each airport, and to have staff on hand at the largest airports to explain the process and answer questions from the traveling public.

Again, I thank the gentlelady for working with us and moving this legislation forward in a bipartisan manner, and look forward to its quick adoption.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the author of this legislation, the Congresswoman from New York, Ms. YVETTE CLARKE.

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member LUNGREN, nearly everyone in the homeland security community agrees that having a single comprehensive list of terrorist suspects is an important tool in keeping America safe.

However, there are flaws in how the terrorist watch list is maintained and used. Perhaps the biggest problem is that every single day, countless Americans are misidentified as terrorists. These errors most commonly occur when an innocent person's name happens to be similar to one listed in the database. This results in wasted time, both for law enforcement, because they're using resources investigating innocent people, and for the general public who face the prospect of being wrongly detained and possibly altogether prevented from going about their business.

Most commonly, this affects air travelers who are screened against the watch list more often than anyone else. Currently, each time a reservation is made, airlines must determine whether a customer is a potential match based on information they receive from our government.

Every day, thousands of people are pulled aside, required to go through special procedures, detained, or even denied boarding altogether, at great cost to frustrated travelers who miss flights, which ruins plans, and at great cost to companies which depend on business travel whose employees miss meetings and lose productivity.

Because of the terrorist watch list that is being used for screening agencies, many people other than domestic air travelers have also been impacted by misidentifications. Some of these people include international travelers delayed or denied entry to the country by CBP; potential foreign visitors denied visas by the State Department, and other workers, port workers who have been incorrectly denied a transportation worker identification card, which is now required to work at a port facility in the United States. In the future, this will likely become a greater issue, as more potentially sensitive activities are tied to screening against the watch list.

In 2007, TSA attempted to address this issue by initiating a redress process called DHS TRIP. But this program has multiple problems, and its scope is limited just to air travelers. Because of the program's limitations, many travelers go through the process only to find they are again misidentified as terrorists in the future.

The FAST Redress Act solves this problem by granting DHS the tools to create a department-wide Office of Redress and Appeals, a one-stop shop for any individual who feels they are being incorrectly identified as a terrorist

whenever they have contact with our government.

Using the Office of Redress, people can voluntarily submit to our government and be put into a single comprehensive cleared list, ensuring they will avoid future misidentification when dealing with any Department entity.

This bill also allows the Secretary to enter into intergovernmental memorandums of understanding so this cleared list can be used by all government screening entities.

This bill will greatly streamline the process for the countless people who, just because of their names, are regularly misidentified as a terrorist, creating a single, high visible office within our government for everyone who wants to clear their names.

I'm very thankful to Chairman THOMPSON and Ranking Member KING, along with TS&IP Chairwoman JACKSON-LEE and Ranking Member LUNGREN for recognizing the importance of this issue and their great bipartisan efforts pushing the FAST Redress Act forward.

I also thank the staff on both sides of the Homeland Security Committee for their hard work and the time they put into this bill.

Further, since introduction, this bill has received the strong support of the National Business Travel Association, who recognize its benefits for the business travel community. I thank them for their support which remains instrumental as we continue to make this bill law.

Finally, I'd like to thank the people of Central Brooklyn that filed into my district office week after week seeking relief after being misidentified against the watch list.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman from New York has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional minute to the gentlelady.

Ms. CLARKE. The challenges that they faced served as the brainchild for this legislation.

I ask my colleagues to join me in the restoration of civil liberties, creating a truly fair, accurate, secure and timely redress process. I ask them to join me in support of the bipartisan bill, H.R. 4179, the FAST Redress Act of 2008.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4179, the FAST Redress Act, is an important bill, and we should act on it today, and we should try and get concurrence with the Senate and have this on the President's desk so he can sign it so that we can take care of the problem of misidentifications on the terrorist screening list that we use for a legitimate purpose.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that we might have a fast redress act for the American people who are currently standing in line waiting to pay for their gasoline at larger and larger and larger prices. One of the things we need to do, in terms of this bill, is redress the misinformation that's contained on terrorist screener watch lists.

We similarly need to get rid of the misidentification that deals with the issue of Americans' need for energy and what ANWR represents. Rather than what we've heard on the floor on a number of different occasions, including today, that somehow ANWR is insignificant with respect to the great question of energy that currently approaches the American people, the facts say something very different.

In other words, if we check them against the facts as this bill wants us to check misidentifications against the factual determinations, we would find this: According to the United States Geological Survey, the mean estimate of technically recoverable oil, that's the kind of oil that we can bring up under already existing technology in the coastal plain of ANWR, is 10.4 billion barrels, all of which is now economically recoverable.

□ 1100

Now, what is 10.4 billion barrels? More than twice the proven oil reserves in all of the State of Texas. And you know how Texans like to brag about what they got and how big it is. This would be twice the proven oil reserves that are now found in all of Texas. That's almost half of the total U.S. proven reserve at 21 billion barrels. That represents a possible 50 percent increase in total U.S. proven reserves. That has been categorized on this floor as being insignificant and of having no impact on the current energy scene. I think checking it against the facts, we see that's wrong.

Based on the USGS mean estimate, ANWR would provide one million barrels per day for 30 years. That's one million barrels per day for 30 years. Now what would that represent? Some insignificant figure? No. That's a 20 percent increase in domestic, or as we would like to call it, American production. That's equivalent to what the entire State of Texas produces daily. And listen to this. That is the equivalent to 30 years' worth of imports from Hugo Chavez.

The coastal plain of ANWR, known as the 1002 area, is neither wilderness nor refuge. In fact, when I was here in this House privileged to serve in 1980, it was set aside by this Congress and then-President Carter specifically for future oil development.

Now, do we ever hear about that? That's as much as a misidentification of what the reality is of what we're talking about in this bill. Development would be limited to the 2,000 acres of the coastal plain. That would be 0.01 percent of the entire 19.6 million acre refuge.

So Mr. Speaker, as I said, I rise in support of this bill, H.R. 4179, which would correct misinformation contained in official documents that thereby inconveniences the American people. Similarly, if we took action on a Redress Act for energy on the American people, they would be less inconvenienced and we would be on our way to energy independence.

With that, I would reserve my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. PERLMUTTER).

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for this opportunity to speak on an excellent bill, and I want to commend my friend from New York for bringing this bill to the House of Representatives and bringing it through our committee.

So I rise today to express my strong support for the Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely Redress Act or the FAST Redress Act.

At Denver International Airport, the Nation's fourth busiest airport, tens of thousands of passengers go through security each day. For most, the screening process is straightforward and is as efficient a policy as possible. But for some, like the John Thompsons of Colorado, flying is a painful and difficult experience, not because of the items they bring through security or the way they act, but simply because of their name. And they range from 8-year-olds to 80-year-olds.

There are thousands of Americans whose names are similar to terrorists listed on the No Fly List. And when travelling, the airlines and TSA do not distinguish these law-abiding Americans from criminals on the list who happen to have the same name. As a result, these citizens may be forced to undergo extensive, time-consuming additional screening and questioning. This happens not just once but every single time the person travels.

To avoid it happening on every occasion, they can go through the Department of Homeland Security Travel Redress Inquiry Program to get removed from the list, but that process is slow and ineffective. Furthermore, it doesn't currently address the concern that each airline uses the travel redress program differently.

That is why I am a cosponsor of this important legislation. Our Nation's passengers affected by mistaken identity deserve an office within the Department of Homeland Security to help resolve these identity problems once and for all. Our Nation's passengers deserve a comprehensive cleared list to match the No Fly List which is provided to airport security and the airlines to be used in a uniform manner.

Our Nation's passengers deserve a Federal plan to verify their identity and make sure they are safe to fly. This bill achieves these goals and makes our flying public safer while keeping commerce going.

I want to thank Congresswoman CLARKE and Committee Chairman THOMPSON, as well as Ranking Member Mr. LUNGREN and Chairwoman SHEILA

JACKSON-LEE and the other members of the committee for their hard work on this important matter.

I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I would just say that this bill deserves the unanimous support of the Members of this body.

With that, I would yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman of the Homeland Security Committee. Mr. Speaker, I ask to revise and extend.

I want to add my appreciation to, again, the very, very able and distinguished Member YVETTE CLARKE from New York for her strong advocation for H.R. 4179 and legislation that came through the subcommittee of transportation security, which I chair, and her wisdom on bringing about a solution to a long-standing problem that we have seen come about after 9/11.

Every day, millions of Americans travel across the country and abroad by land, air, and sea. Unfortunately, we have a process in place, the terrorist watch list or database, which makes, or should make, traveling safe. However, there have been problems and misidentifications. Even air marshals have been denied boarding on air carriers on the very flights they were assigned to protect because of misidentification.

To date, more than 15,000 Americans have sought redress from the Transportation Security Administration and voluntarily provided information. But this system has not worked. We know two of our very own dear colleagues, Senator KENNEDY and JOHN LEWIS, who I think have a pedigree beyond reproach, have been set aside, if you will, in trying to fly.

And so therefore, it is important to have a redress process that works and to assure that a person on the TSA's Clear List will not be stopped as a potential terrorist. H.R. 4179 by Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE will establish an appeal and redress process to ensure that the Office of Appeals and Redress at the Department of Homeland Security actually work.

I do want to congratulate her for this forward thinking. I look forward to working with her as we move forward on additional legislation that addresses the question of dress. As we all know, imams who have cleared TSA could not board a plane in one of our midwest States because they were determined to be a threat when they had passed security, when their name was not on the watch list, and only because of religious actions.

And so this is an important step forward. We should be a Nation of security but also the protection of civil liberties. And I look forward to us making further steps to ensure that religious dress, attire, and talk does not in any way undermine your constitutional rights in this question.

My appreciation to Congresswoman CLARKE. I ask my colleagues to enthusiastically support this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4179, To amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish an appeal and redress process for individuals wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight, and for other purposes, introduced by my distinguished colleague from New York, Representative CLARKE, of which I am a proud original cosponsor. This important legislation will provide an effective and efficient mechanism through which Americans can seek redress.

Every day, millions of Americans travel across the country and abroad, by land, air, and sea. Fortunately, we have a process in place, the terrorist watch list or database, which makes travel safer for the traveling public. However, that very process has been plagued with problems and misidentifications. The American public has grown weary of the constant delays and misidentifications caused by incomplete and inaccurate information associated with the terrorist watch list or database.

For years, even Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) have been denied boarding by air carriers on the very flights they were assigned to protect because of misidentifications. To date, more than 15,000 Americans have sought redress from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and voluntarily provided personal information to facilitate travel and prevent further misidentifications and delays. While the TSA maintains a "Cleared List" for individuals who have the same or similar name or other identifier as someone on the "No Fly" or "Selectee" lists but have gone through the redress process, there is a significant stagnation in the columniation and sharing of information. The Cleared List is then shared with airlines for screening purposes but it is not shared within the Department of Homeland Security or with other Federal agencies that use the terrorist watch list or database. Therefore, despite going through the redress process, there's nothing to assure that a person on the TSA's "Cleared List" will not be stopped as a potential terrorist by other Federal agencies, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Sharing information on the Comprehensive Cleared List between components of the Department would alleviate redundancy and reduce excessive delays.

H.R. 4179, the Fair, Accurate, Secure and Timely (FAST) Redress Act of 2008, will establish an appeal and redress process to ensure that the Office of Appeals and Redress at the Department of Homeland Security becomes the "one-stop shop" that the American public deserves.

This legislation will require the DHS Secretary to establish a timely and fair redress process for individuals who believe they have been delayed or prohibited from boarding a commercial plane or denied a right, benefit, or privilege by DHS, because they were wrongly identified as a threat when screened against any terrorist watch list or database. It would also require the Office of Appeals and Redress to maintain a Comprehensive Cleared List that contains the names of individuals who have been misidentified and have corrected erroneous information. The DHS Secretary would be required to furnish the Comprehensive Cleared List to all DHS components and to other Federal, State, local, and Tribal authorities and others that use the terrorist watch list or database, to resolve misidentifications.

This important legislation will consolidate agency knowledge by requiring the compilation of a comprehensive cleared list of individuals who have been misidentified. It furthermore requires that the correction of erroneous information be maintained by the Department and shared with those agencies that use the terrorist watch list or database. Our citizens must not only be afforded an effective redress process, they must also be assured that once they have voluntarily provided personal information and successfully achieved redress, they are not repeatedly subjected to further misidentifications. This legislation is supported by the National Business Travel Association, who wrote to the Committee on Homeland Security in support of H.R. 4179.

The FAST Redress Act of 2008 explicitly requires the DHS Secretary to assure that TSA, CBP, the Coast Guard and other DHS components reference the Comprehensive Cleared List when assessing the security risk of an individual. It furthermore authorizes the DHS Secretary to enter into Memoranda of Understanding with other Federal agencies to enhance redress, including addressing legal name changes.

This bipartisan legislation directs the Secretary to engage in cooperative agreements with other relevant agencies so that legal name changes are reflected on the watch list and the cleared list. When it comes to watch and cleared lists, accuracy is the key. This change ensures that the Department has the most accurate information to evaluate American citizens.

Mr. Speaker, it is time we protect the civil rights and civil liberties of American citizens and lawful permanent residents. This bill will help eliminate false identifications and increase efficiency for the traveling public and I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as you have heard, H.R. 4179 is a commonsense Homeland Security legislation that has broad support. Representative CLARKE, as well as Chairwoman JACKSON-LEE and Ranking Member LUNGREN, ought to be commended for working together to get this critical legislation to the floor. We all know that the terrorist watch list has its problems. In fact, most of us fly a few times a week and have heard firsthand stories about people missing flights because they were misidentified against the watch list. We need to fix the watch list. That effort is ongoing and needs to continue. But at the same time, we need to provide people with a meaningful remedy.

The FAST Redress Act does just that. That is why I'm proud to cosponsor this legislation authored by my esteemed colleague, Ms. CLARKE.

I urge passage of this important legislation.

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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4179, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish an appeal and redress process for individuals wrongly delayed or prohibited from boarding a flight, or denied a right, benefit, or privilege, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

BIOMETRIC ENHANCEMENT FOR AIRPORT-RISK REDUCTION ACT OF 2008

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5982) to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security, for purposes of transportation security, to conduct a study on how airports can transition to uniform, standards-based, and interoperable biometric identifier systems for airport workers with unescorted access to secure or sterile areas of an airport, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5982

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 ''Biometric Enhancement for Airport-Risk Reduction Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act, the following definitions apply:

(1) BIOMETRIC IDENTIFIER SYSTEM.—The term ''biometric identifier system'' means a system that uses biometric identifier information to match individuals and confirm identity for transportation security and other purposes.

(2) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of Homeland Security acting through the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration).

SEC. 3. BIOMETRIC IDENTIFIER SYSTEMS.

(a) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with the working group of industry stakeholders to be established under subsection (c), shall conduct a study on how airports can transition to uniform, standards-based, and interoperable biometric identifier systems for airport workers with unescorted access to secure or sterile areas of an airport.

(2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the study shall be to enhance transportation security against a potential act of terrorism by an airport worker who is allowed unescorted access to secure or sterile areas of an airport.

(3) RISK-BASED ANALYSIS.—In conducting the study, the Secretary shall conduct a risk-based analysis of selected Category X and I airports and other airports, as the Secretary determines appropriate, to identify where the implementation of biometric identifier systems could benefit airports.

(4) CONSIDERATIONS.—In conducting the study, the Secretary shall consider the following:

(A) PARALLEL SYSTEMS.—Existing parallel biometric security systems applicable to workers with unescorted access to critical infrastructure, including—

(i) transportation security cards issued under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code;

(ii) armed law enforcement travel credentials issued under section 44903(h)(6) of title 49, United States Code; and

(iii) other credential programs used by the Federal Government, as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(B) EFFORTS BY TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.—Any biometric programs or proposals developed by the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration).

(C) INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS.—The architecture, modules, interfaces, and transmission of data needed to address risks associated with securing airports by providing interoperable biometric security measures and credentials for airport workers with unescorted access to secure and sterile areas of an airport.

(D) EXISTING AIRPORT SYSTEMS.—Biometric infrastructure and systems in use in secure and sterile areas of airports.

(E) INCENTIVES.—Possible incentives for airports that voluntarily seek to implement uniform, standards-based, and interoperable biometric identifier systems.

(F) ASSOCIATED COSTS.—The costs of implementing uniform, standards-based, and interoperable biometric identifier systems at airports, including—

(i) the costs to airport operators, airport workers, air carriers, and other aviation industry stakeholders; and

(ii) the costs associated with ongoing operations and maintenance and modifications and enhancements needed to support changes in physical and electronic infrastructure.

(G) GAO RECOMMENDATIONS.—Any recommendations or findings developed by the Government Accountability Office relating to implementing biometric security for airport workers with unescorted access to secure and sterile areas of airports.

(H) INFORMATION FROM OTHER SOURCES.—Recommendations, guidance, and information from other sources, including government entities, organizations representing airport workers, and private individuals and organizations.

(5) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report on the results of the study conducted under this subsection.

(b) BEST PRACTICES.—

(1) IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary, in consultation with the working group of aviation industry stakeholders to be established under subsection (c), shall identify best practices for the administration of biometric credentials at airports, including best practices for each of the following processes:

(A) Registration and enrollment.

(B) Eligibility vetting and risk assessment.

(C) Issuance.

(D) Verification and use.

(E) Expiration and revocation.

(F) Development of a cost structure for acquisition of biometric credentials.

(G) Development of redress processes for workers.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall—

(A) submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a report that outlines the best practices identified under paragraph (1); and

(B) make the report available to airport operators.

(c) AVIATION AND AIRPORT SECURITY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall convene a working group to assist the Secretary with issues pertaining to implementing and carrying out this section.

(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary shall ensure that the membership of the working group includes aviation industry stakeholders and specifically includes individuals selected from among—

(A) the membership of the Transportation Security Administration's Aviation Security Advisory Committee;

(B) individuals and organizations representing airports;

(C) individuals and organizations representing airport workers, including those airport workers with unescorted access to secure and sterile areas of airports;

(D) individuals and organizations representing the biometric technology sector; and

(E) any other individuals and organizations that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(3) NONAPPLICABILITY OF FACA.—The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to working group established under this subsection.

(4) SUNSET.—The working group established under this subsection shall cease operations 30 days after the date of submission of the report under subsection (a)(5) or 30 days after the date of submission of the report under subsection (b)(2), whichever is later.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, last month I introduced H.R. 5982, the Biometric Enhancement for Airport Risk Reduction Act of 2008, also known as the BEAR Act. The bill was marked up and adopted unanimously by the House Committee on Homeland Security on May 20.

The Transportation Security Administration is responsible for securing 450 U.S. airports and employs approximately 50,000 people. It has a very important mission of keeping the traveling public safe from terrorist threats. But the question remains, what is TSA doing to increase security and still allow workers with unescorted access to sterile and secure areas of airports? And what mechanisms are in place to ensure that only the employees are allowed to access the airports' secure and sterile areas.

The BEAR Act addresses these concerns. It requires TSA to provide Congress and airport operators with a report on best practices for using biometrics at airports.

Last November, Federal law enforcement raided Chicago's O'Hare Airport and arrested 23 people for fraudulently securing badges that gave them unescorted access to sensitive airport locations. According to the charging affidavit, more than 100 temporary workers were found to be in possession of fraudulent badges. And the investigation revealed that the staffing agency that sponsored these workers told them that they needed identification, but it did not have to be legitimate.

Today, workers with unescorted access to these critical facilities go through background screening to get identification badges. This background screening includes checking against a terrorist watch list. While this is a necessary and important check, a worker's biometrics are not being captured in check against biographic information to establish the individual's identity.

Since the Chicago incident, there has been a growing international trend to incorporate biometric identifying credentials in airport IDs. Canada and the United Kingdom have already taken action to address the security risk at airports by using biometric identifying credentials for airport workers.

Although I recognize the ongoing work that TSA has been doing in the last year or so, it's time for them to consider moving forward. The BEAR Act will make this happen.

The bill promotes collaboration between TSA industry, labor, and other stakeholders to collectively develop and provide airports with a blueprint on how to make biometrics work for them. The BEAR Act, as amended, includes changes proposed by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and TSA to improve the bill, including clarifying that TSA should only conduct a risk-based study of Category 10 and Category 1 airports on a selected groups of airports, defining uniform biometric identified systems to make sure that TSA looks at systems that actually match individuals, not just cards, that have biometrics on them, recognizing and not tampering with TSA's ongoing efforts in the area of biometrics such as the TWIC program and other programs.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5982.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5982. As a Californian, the State that was once known as the Bear Republic, and proud resident of the State of California, which has the bear flag, I rise in support of the BEAR bill that the gentleman from Mississippi has introduced and brought to the floor today.

□ 1115

The chairman from Mississippi has brought us a bill that seeks to build on work that has already been done in previous Congresses and also with TSA, but I think he gives us a little bit of a push to move in the direction of biometrics.

The Biometric Enhancement for Airport-Risk Reduction Act simply recognizes that as we go forward in trying to secure our airports and the flying public and the cargo from terrorist attack we need to use those things which give us an advantage over those who would do harm to us, and that means we need to have the smart use of technology.

The gentleman from Mississippi has been one of those who has spoken for several years about the fact that we need to get biometrics on board more quickly than we have, and I join the gentleman in that hope. I think this bill will move us in that direction.

People should understand that biometrics merely refers to identifiers. They could be something as simple as fingerprints. They could be iris scans, things of that sort, some medium by which we are able to identify an individual with the documentation that they have. And then if you have readers that are all over the landscape now for various different enterprises, it allows you in an economical and in an efficient way to identify the individuals that are granted access to particular areas, and this is particularly important when we're talking about vast areas that we find at airports.

Airports are not severely confined by geography as are some other enterprises, some other commercial enterprises, where you might be able to more easily secure the area. Particularly when you have airports where you have individuals who are cleared to work there, moving in and out, in and out, in and out of areas which are supposed to be secured areas, you have to find a reasonably efficient means that is also an effective means of identifying those people who should be in those areas and those people who should not be in those areas.

And that is why biometric technology presents such an opportunity for us, and for these and other reasons I would support H.R. 5982.

At this time, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Mississippi, the chairman of the committee, and I want to thank him and applaud him for this legislation.

As has been indicated on the floor, the importance of ensuring the security and the sanctity of the particular identification, the technology, is key. One of the key problems that we have found in homeland security is, of course, the ability to tamper with the security document or the process. This legislation is an important, enhanced effort to ensure that that does not happen.

I want to thank the chairman for his leadership on this particular issue, and also, I think it's important to note that one of the commitments that homeland security has made is, ''Not on our watch,'' and we have steadfastly looked at all of the elements that need to be improved and enhanced in border security and aviation security to ensure that there are documents that can be, on their face, the kind of document that provides the necessary review and protection for the traveling public and for those who do business in the ports of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5982, the Biometric Enhancement Act for Airport-Risk Reduction Act of 2008, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Mississippi, Chairman THOMPSON. This important legislation requires TSA to provide Congress and airport operators with a breakdown on best practices for utilizing biometrics to better protect airports.

In the last few months, the Transportation Security Administration, TSA, has unveiled several new programs and initiatives that are proving to build a ''layered approach'' to security. And while the TSA is responsible for the 450 U.S. airports, and employs approximately 50,000, with the very important mission of keeping the traveling public safe from terrorist threats, it has done very little to strengthen airport security for workers with unescorted access to sterile and secure areas of the airport. At the present time, there are few mechanisms in place to ensure that contracted employees follow due diligence at our airports and access is granted to only those employees who belong on airport grounds at any given time. This legislation addresses these key issues by requiring TSA to provide Congress and airport operators with a breakdown on best practices for utilizing biometrics to better protect airports.

Mr. Speaker, only last November, Federal law enforcement raided Chicago's O'Hare International Airport in November 2007 and arrested 23 people for fraudulently securing badges to gain access to sensitive airport locations. According to the charging affidavit, more than 100 temporary workers were found to be in possession of the fraudulent badges and the staffing agency that sponsored these workers told them that they needed identification, but such identification did not have to be legitimate.

While today's workers with unescorted access to this critical infrastructure go through background screening, which includes terror watch list checks, to get issued badges, more must be done. While this is a necessary and important check, a job applicant's biometrics are not being captured to check against biographic information provided to establish the individual's identity. The legislation we have before us today is a smart security approach that promotes collaboration between TSA, industry, labor and other key stakeholders to work together to collectively develop and provide airports with a blueprint on how to make biometrics work for them.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation requires TSA to study how airports can transition to uniform, standards-based and interoperable biometric identifier systems for airport workers with unescorted access. This bill furthermore requires TSA and the working group to examine

existing programs, such as TWIC, and identify approaches on how biometrics can enhance protections for secure and sterile areas of the airport. TSA is also required by this bill to provide Congress and airport operators with a breakdown on best practices for using biometrics to improve airport security.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is not about re-inventing the wheel or putting a stop to any good work at TSA on this issue. It is about encouraging public-private partnerships and promoting an open dialogue between TSA, industry, and Congress on how best to secure our airports. I am proud to support this important and timely legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to join me in so doing.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY).

Mrs. LOWEY. I wanted to rise to thank our chairman for your important work on this issue. We have worked together on 100 percent screening of workers at airports, and now, there is a pilot project in place for seven of those airports, and we know that in three they are doing 100 percent screening. And at the others, they're looking at other methods, and one of the methods that they are seriously considering and some are using are the issue of biometrics because it is so important.

So I do want to thank the chairman for your leadership on this issue, and I look forward to following the work of the seven airports. Hopefully, we'll be able to spread it to all of our airports.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, again, in closing, I rise in support of H.R. 5982, the BEAR Act, the Biometric Enhancement for Airport-Risk Reduction Act, brought to us by the chairman of this committee. This is an advancement. This is a push to where we need to go with respect to biometrics.

We ought to understand that the United States is the leader in the world in technology and technology application. We need to do that here as well. And it sometimes seems strange that we don't take advantage of the leadership that we have in applying it to certain areas. The urgency that we need to adopt with respect to the threat that is out there is, I think, shared by this committee, but I'm not sure that it is shared totally by the full Congress, nor by the Federal establishment all together nor, in some cases, by the American people, where, after our successes in forestalling any major terrorist attack on our shores since 9/11, it allows us a certain relaxation that I think is dangerous. The gentleman moves us in the right direction with this bill.

I might say that as we move with this bill I would hope we would move with some other bills on this floor dealing with the threat that we have to our national economy and our national security through our energy dependence on many, many others.

The U.S. is the leader in the potential for oil shale, just as we're the leader in technology in this world. The U.S. might be called the Saudi Arabia of oil shale. According to the Department of Energy, this Nation is endowed with more than 2 trillion barrels of oil. To put this figure in perspective, the world has used 1 trillion barrels of oil since the first oil well was successfully drilled in Pennsylvania in 1859. According to the Department of Energy, let me repeat, we are endowed with more than 2 trillion barrels of oil, and we're talking about U.S. oil shale.

The problem is that we had a rider on an appropriations bill just last year that makes this huge domestic resource off-limits. That would be as silly as us having a bill on the floor that would say, even though we're the leader in biometric technology, we will prohibit its use in the area of airport security. That would make no sense, Mr. Speaker, nor does it make sense for us not to utilize this tremendous resource we have.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I would say that I would encourage all Members to support H.R. 5982, the Biometric Enhancement for Airport-Risk Reduction Act, otherwise known as the BEAR Act, brought to us on this floor by the distinguished gentleman from Mississippi, the chairman of our committee.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this commonsense approach to studying how biometrics can be used to improve airport security.

I think it is important to make clear again, this bill does not create any new mandates on airports. This bill does not require airports to use biometric identifying systems. Instead, it only provides for a study of how biometrics could be used.

I strongly believe that strategic deployment of biometrics in the airport is a sensible part of any layered security plan for the airport environment. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation and make our airports safer.

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5982, Chairman THOMPSON's legislation that would take an important step toward improving airport security.

Since 9/11, Congress and the airline industry have taken strong actions to tighten security at our nation's airports.

These measures have included the creation of the TSA, the expansion of the air marshal service, and the full screening of airline passengers.

Chairman THOMPSON's proposal before us today would build upon these early efforts by implementing a study on the use of biometrics in identifying airport workers.

As TSA continues to look for ways to ensure that airport workers—in addition to passengers—do not pose security risks, pursuing biometrics is a timely and necessary effort.

At the same time, pursuing biometrics would also enhance efforts to conduct 100 percent screening of airport workers with access to secure parts of an airport.

Congresswoman NITA LOWEY and I have long supported 100 percent screening of airport workers.

Earlier in this Congress, we were proud to introduce and pass H.R. 1413, a bill to establish a pilot program to test such worker screening at a number of airports.

Just recently, TSA launched a pilot similar to the program outlined in our bill, and I look forward to learning the results of this important test upon its completion.

Of course, no one wants more bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake, but Congress needs to look continuously for ways to improve protection for the traveling public.

As 9/11 so painfully taught us, we must resolve our security weaknesses before terrorists exploit the remaining gaps.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5982.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5982, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

CATCHING OPERATIONAL VULNERABILITIES BY ENSURING RANDOM TESTING ACT OF 2008

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5909) to amend the Aviation and Transportation Security Act to prohibit advance notice to certain individuals, including security screeners, of covert testing of security screening procedures for the purpose of enhancing transportation security at airports, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5909

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 ''Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008'' or the ''COVERT Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF ADVANCE NOTICE OF COVERT TESTING TO SECURITY SCREENERS.

Section 111 of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (Public Law 107–71; 49 U.S.C. 44935 note) is amended—

(1) by striking the section enumerator and heading and inserting the following:

"SEC. 111. TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, AND TESTING OF SECURITY SCREENING PERSONNEL."

and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(e) PROHIBITION OF ADVANCE NOTICE TO SECURITY SCREENERS OF COVERT TESTING AND EVALUATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall ensure that information concerning a covert test of a transportation security system to be conducted by a covert testing office, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, or the Government Accountability Office is not provided to any individual prior to the completion of the test.

''(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1)—

''(A) an individual may provide information concerning a covert test of a transportation security system to employees, officers, and contractors of the Federal Government (including military personnel); employees and officers of State and local governments; and law enforcement officials, who are authorized to receive or directed to be provided such information by the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration), the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, or the Comptroller General of the United States, as the case may be; and

''(B) for the purpose of ensuring the security of any individual in the vicinity of a site where a covert test of a transportation security system is being conducted, an individual conducting the test may disclose his or her status as an individual conducting the test to any appropriate individual if a security screener or other individual who is not a covered employee identifies the individual conducting the test as a potential threat.

''(3) SPECIAL RULES FOR THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.—

''(A) MONITORING AND SECURITY OF TESTING PERSONNEL.—The head of each covert testing office shall ensure that a person or group of persons conducting a covert test of a transportation security system for the covert testing office is accompanied at the site of the test by a cover team comprised of one or more employees of the covert testing office for the purpose of monitoring the test and confirming the identity of personnel involved in the test under subparagraph (B).

''(B) RESPONSIBILITY OF COVER TEAM.—Under this paragraph, a cover team for a covert test of a transportation security system shall—

''(i) monitor the test; and

''(ii) for the purpose of ensuring the security of any individual in the vicinity of a site where the test is being conducted, confirm, notwithstanding paragraph (1), the identity of any individual conducting the test to any appropriate individual if a security screener or other individual who is not a covered employee identifies the individual conducting the test as a potential threat.

''(C) AVIATION SCREENING.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Transportation Security Administration is not required to have a cover team present during a test of the screening of persons, carry-on items, or checked baggage at an aviation security checkpoint at or serving an airport if the test—

''(i) is approved by the Federal Security Director for such airport; and

''(ii) is carried out under an aviation screening assessment program of the Department of Homeland Security.

''(D) USE OF OTHER PERSONNEL.—The Transportation Security Administration may use employees, officers, and contractors of the Federal Government (including military personnel) and employees and officers of State and local governments to conduct covert tests.

''(4) IMPACT STUDY AND REPORT ON COVERT TESTING PROCEDURES.—

''(A) IMPACT STUDY.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall conduct a study of the impact of the implementation of this subsection on the Department of Homeland Security's efforts to improve transportation security.

''(B) REQUIREMENTS.—The study under subparagraph (A) shall include an assessment of—

''(i) the impact of the implementation of this subsection on personnel of the Department of Homeland Security;

''(ii) the impact of such implementation on information sharing within the Department;

''(iii) best practices for integrating the topic of covert testing into existing training and testing programs for personnel of the Department; and

''(iv) the effectiveness of covert testing as a method to improve security.

''(C) REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report that contains—

''(i) the results of the study under subparagraph (A);

''(ii) recommendations for changes to the training of personnel of the Department that are necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of this subsection; and

''(iii) recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of this subsection.

''(5) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this subsection, the following definitions apply:

''(A) APPROPRIATE INDIVIDUAL.—The term 'appropriate individual', as used with respect to a covert test of a transportation security system, means any individual that—

''(i) the individual conducting the test determines needs to know his or her status as an individual conducting a test under paragraph (2)(B); or

''(ii) the cover team monitoring the test under paragraph (3)(B)(i) determines needs to know the identity of an individual conducting the test.

''(B) COVERED EMPLOYEE.—The term 'covered employee' means any individual who receives notice of a covert test before the completion of a test under paragraph (2)(A).

''(C) COVERT TEST.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The term 'covert test' means an exercise or activity conducted by a covert testing office, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, or the Government Accountability Office to intentionally test, compromise, or circumvent transportation security systems to identify vulnerabilities in such systems.

''(ii) LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding clause (i), the term 'covert test' does not mean an exercise or activity by an employee or contractor of the Transportation Security Administration to test or assess compliance with regulations under title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

''(D) COVERT TESTING OFFICE.—The term 'covert testing office' means any office of the Transportation Security Administration designated by the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to conduct covert tests of transportation security systems.

''(E) EMPLOYEE OF A COVERT TESTING OFFICE.—The term 'employee of a covert testing office' means an individual who is an employee of a covert testing office or a contractor or an employee of a contractor of a covert testing office.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5909, the Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008, or the COVERT Act of 2008, was introduced by Congresswoman LOWEY of New York.

The COVERT Act of 2008 was introduced to eliminate the practice of giving advance notice to transportation security workers of covert tests before the tests happened. I want to thank Congresswoman LOWEY and the other members of the Committee on Homeland Security for working together in a bipartisan manner to approve this measure unanimously.

I also want to thank the Transportation Security Administration for recognizing the need for this legislation and working with us to ensure that the bill accomplishes its goal without impeding the way in which TSA conducts its covert testing.

This legislation is vital to protecting the integrity of covert tests of transportation security systems. We know of at least three incidents where covert tests were compromised by individuals who inappropriately warned security officials.

This bill will prohibit individuals from providing advance notice of these important covert tests to any persons, unless authorized to do so by the Assistant Secretary of TSA, the Inspector General of DHS, or the Comptroller General of GAO.

Covert testing efforts by TSA, the DHS IG, and GAO have helped to increase the effectiveness of our transportation security systems by highlighting vulnerabilities and keeping the screening workforce on their toes. Any effort to compromise these important testing efforts, whether intentional or accidental, should not be tolerated by this Congress.

If we choose to ignore the problems of the past, we will provide future opportunities to compromise a worthy program intended to educate the workforce and benefit the security of our transportation security systems throughout the country.

I strongly encourage all my colleagues to support H.R. 5909, which complements the work the committee has done on H.R. 1684, the DHS authorization bill that is pending before the Senate.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5909, the Catching Operational

Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008, otherwise known as the COVERT Act.

This act simply would prohibit the disclosure of information concerning a covert test conducted by TSA, the Inspector General of DHS, or GAO to any individual prior to the completion of the test. The bill also requires any TSA covert testing team to be accompanied by a cover team to monitor the covert test and to confirm the identity of the covert testing team to any appropriate individual, if an individual or security screener not aware of the covert test identifies the covert testing team as a threat to security.

This bill is substantially modified from the bill as originally introduced because there was some real give-and-take and compromise produced on the part of both sides of the aisle at the subcommittee level and with the full committee staff.

□ 1130

And for that I am thankful and believe that we have a better product as a result of that consultation and that give and take.

One of the things we wanted to make sure we did not do in attempting to prevent people spilling the beans, so to speak, on these kinds of covert tests was to have such a heavy-handed approach that it might tip off people by the presence of additional folks. We've worked that out here, and I thank the gentleman and the gentlelady for being able to do that.

I would just have one small point, perhaps disagreement with the chairman. There are reports that there was a tipping off in one particular instance that was intentional, seemingly meant to give people notice that there was going to be a test or it was about to take place. In another case, at least from my review of the files, it appears to be inadvertent, and I believe something on the order of within 30 seconds the notice that was contained in an e-mail was retrieved by the responsible party when he realized someone else had put that out. And then there's a third one that's somewhat in dispute between TSA and some Members of the House, and others.

And all I would say is, irrespective of how many there were, if there was just one, that's one too many. This bill I think helps us move in the direction of improving the circumstances so the likelihood of that occurring is much less in the future than it would have been without this legislation. And so for those reasons, I would enthusiastically support H.R. 5909 and ask my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the author and supporter of this legislation, the gentlelady from New York (Mrs. LOWEY).

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5909 and begin by thanking Chairman THOMPSON, Ranking Member KING, Subcommittee Chairwoman JACKSON-LEE, and Subcommittee Ranking Member LUNGREN for moving this legislation to the floor.

My bill, the Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing, or COVERT, Act would prohibit the advance notification of covert tests on transportation systems without direct approval from the highest officials in our Homeland Security operations.

This legislation bolsters accountability and integrity for covert testing within our transportation systems overseen by the Transportation Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security.

The core principles and goals of covert testing are undermined when individuals are alerted in advance that a test or evaluation is imminent. In fact, in case we haven't figured it out, there is nothing covert about activities employees already know will occur. Unfortunately, there have been a number of reported incidents in which covert tests may have been compromised as a result of advanced notification to Transportation Security officers.

The Inspector General at the Department of Homeland Security found that between August 2003 and May 2004, Transportation Security Administration officials at San Francisco International Airport compromised covert testing efforts by tracking testers throughout the airport utilizing surveillance cameras, then notifying screening personnel in advance of the testers arriving at security checkpoints. The Inspector General also found that Transportation Security officers at Jackson-Evers International Airport in Jackson, Mississippi, reported receiving advance notice of covert tests conducted by TSA's Office of Inspection on February 12, 2004.

Finally, led by Chairman THOMPSON's efforts, the Homeland Security Committee discovered on April 2006 an e-mail sent via TSA's net hub system from the Office of Security Operations to all Federal security directors and other TSA airport officials informing them of testing at airports throughout the country.

In this unfortunate instance, while the e-mail may have violated TSA protocols, it did not constitute the sharing of sensitive information under the law. My legislation will close that loophole, making it a violation to tip off employees before covert tests without high-level approval at TSA and DHS.

During mark-up of this legislation, the Homeland Security Committee adopted an amendment allowing local law enforcement to be notified prior to a test if directed by the administrator providing for personnel flexibility by clarifying that only one individual is necessary to serve as a cover agent supervising testing, and including a study on implementation of these procedures and their impact on the Department's effort to improve transportation security.

I want to make it very clear to my colleagues that this bill does not tie the hands of DHS or TSA. It simply ensures that any decision to notify personnel in advance must come directly from the TSA administrator, the Inspector General of the Department, or the Comptroller General at GAO to ensure the safety of the traveling public and the testers.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5909.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlelady an additional minute.

Mrs. LOWEY. I will probably need an additional 4 minutes to respond, if you have it, Mr. Chairman, to Mr. LUNGREN on this very, very important issue that he has been referencing concerning drilling.

We've been hearing frequently from my colleagues, my good friends like Mr. LUNGREN, from President Bush, and from other Republicans in the Congress. They continue to argue that opening more of the Outer Continental Shelf to oil and gas drilling will lower gasoline prices. But we can't drill our way to energy independence. The United States has only 1.6 percent of the world's oil reserves, but Americans consume 25 percent of the oil used around the world every day. Nearly 80 percent of oil and 82 percent of natural gas believed to exist on the Outer Continental Shelf is located in areas that are now open for leasing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlelady an additional 3 minutes to complete her statement.

Mrs. LOWEY. I thank the distinguished Chair.

Only 10.5 million of the 44 million leased offshore acres are actually producing oil or gas. So oil companies, my colleagues, are reaping billions in record profits, $123 billion in 2007 alone, received billions in subsidies in the 2005 energy bill, but they are not using the Federal lands already open to development. Given this, opening sensitive areas to drilling makes no sense.

For example, ExxonMobil made $40 billion in profits last year alone, but has only increased investment in drilling and production by $3 billion over the last 5 years. Oil and gas companies have stockpiled 9,000 drilling permits—9,000—my good friends—drilling permits—without expanding domestic production.

The New Direction Congress is working to make America more energy independent and secure, lower costs to consumers, grow our economy with hundreds of thousands of new green jobs, and reduce global warming. This Congress has fought for historic new commitments to American-grown biofuels, sustained investments in clean renewable energy, large-scale efficiency improvements to buildings and

transportation, enhanced tools to crack down on OPEC price fixing and price gouging, and to investigate the effects on price of rampant commodity speculation. And this Congress has forced the President to increase supply and thereby lower costs by not continuing to fill the almost full Strategic Petroleum Reserve starting June 30.

I'm sure this debate will continue, my colleagues. And it seems to be a mantra of many of my good friends on the other side of the aisle, but I do wish there would be more focus on the oil companies using the drilling leases that they have and taking some of those profits and investing them and producing the oil that we need.

So I thank you, I thank the Chair, and I thank my good friend on the other side of the aisle for focusing on this issue. I'm sure we'll continue this discussion. But I would like to conclude by thanking everybody, because it has been a bipartisan effort, and I encourage support of H.R. 5909.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. May I inquire as to how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again I rise in support of H.R. 5909, the Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008. I just wish we had the Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Real Energy Production in this Country Act of 2008.

The gentlelady from New York has suggested that it's almost insignificant what we do offshore and that we are not actually going after those things right now. Well, let me just put some facts on the table.

According to the U.S. Minerals Management Service—not a Republican or Democratic operation—America's deep seas on the Outer Continental Shelf contain 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Now, to put that in perspective, the United States consumes 23 trillion cubic feet per year; so 20 times, almost, what we get per year.

And 86 billion barrels of oil contained in the deep seas on the Outer Continental Shelf; 86 billion barrels of oil, and currently the U.S. imports 4.5 billion barrels of oil per year. So that's about the equivalent of a little less than 20 years of our imports. But 85 percent of the lower 48 Outer Continental Shelf energy resources remain under the lock and key of the Federal Government.

Now, why do I say this deals with operational vulnerabilities? We have said in this bill that if you tip off people that they're being investigated, they might not act as they normally do. They might take advantage of you because they know that you are doing these covert operations. Similarly, we are the only developed Nation in the world that forbids safe energy production on our Outer Continental Shelf. No other country in the world does that. Brazil just explored on theirs, and they found the largest single gas find in modern history. In fact, some people are saying that Brazil will now be energy independent and not even have to deal with their ethanol production by way of sugar. Oh, by the way, we could be importing ethanol from sugar from Brazil at much lower costs than ethanol produced by corn in the United States. We have a 53 cent per gallon subsidy for corn-based ethanol, and we have something on the order of a 51 cent tariff on any ethanol brought in produced by sugar from Brazil or anywhere else, and I believe the farm bill brings it down to 45 cents. So we basically have put ourselves in the hole by about 90 cents per gallon with respect to ethanol that makes more cents from sugar than that that we're producing in corn.

But even though Brazil is the leader in the world in ethanol produced by sugar, it went ahead and explored on their Outer Continental Shelf. And what did they find? The largest single find. Now, if you had looked a year ago or 2 years ago about the proven reserves for Brazil, that would not even be there because we didn't know about it.

The other thing is, with technology, already known fields can produce more than they ever did before. One of the reasons I have a little bit of knowledge of this, I grew up in Long Beach, California.

□ 1145

We have been producing offshore Long Beach since before I was born. Every single citizen of the State of California who has any interest in the schools of California is proud of the fact, frankly, that there are subsidies that go to our schools from the royalties paid as a result of producing offshore Long Beach.

Now we haven't had a major oil spill in my lifetime. We have I think over 1,000 rigs in the gulf coast that have been sitting there during these tremendous storms that we call hurricanes, including Katrina, that came through that area in the last few years. Not a single drop of oil has resulted, even though we have had massive destruction of all other kinds of facilities in that area.

The United States companies, that some on this floor have berated, have spent billions of dollars in development of new technology to make it safer. And the suggestion that somehow they are hiding, somehow they are not utilizing these leases that they have, is just a fantastic claim, because it is utterly preposterous that they would pay money for leases and then not try to see what is there. The fact of the matter is that 52 percent of the oil and gas wells that have been drilled by American companies, 52 percent over the last 5 years, have turned out dry. Now, did they get these leases because they wanted to find dry wells? No. They went because there is a certain risk.

It is not as easy as is suggested on this floor of the House that, okay, I am an oil company. I make money. I have friends who have worked on oil rigs who are missing fingers from the work that goes on there. I have friends that have worked in South and Central America who have worked on rigs at all time using what is called drilling mud, using those drill bits, losing fingers, working hard at it, realizing that you don't have a guarantee of every time you put a well down, you are going to get oil up.

So I just find it fantastic that in this argument, number one, we are told, well, we don't have that much oil. It is really the fault of Americans because they use so much oil. I don't know whether that sells too much, blaming Americans for using energy that allows their lives to be better than our parents' and grandparents' generation was in terms of the standard of living. And secondly, to berate American companies that are leaders in the world in technology around the world.

It is strange to me that some on the other side of the aisle believe that it is important for us to make sure we don't have any Outer Continental Shelf drilling off Florida, for instance, when Cuba has lease agreements with a number of countries, including China, although they haven't yet started to drill, that would allow them to drill within either 45 miles or 60 miles of our Florida coast. Now maybe it makes sense to tell the American people that they are at fault. I don't believe they are at fault. I think they are looking at us for some solutions.

We have a solution here to the problem of the possibility of tipping people off to testing. It makes no sense to me, and most on my side of the aisle, for us to be the only developed nation in the world tipping off the rest of the world that we are going to close off most of our areas of natural resources. Remember, when we got Alaska, some referred to it as Seward's Folly. Maybe we didn't realize the folly until now when we intentionally cut off our ability to be able to environmentally and safely explore and produce energy in Alaska.

But we divert a little bit from this bill. This bill is the Catching Operational Vulnerabilities By Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008, COVERT testing. I congratulate the gentlelady for bringing this bill forward. I congratulate the chairwoman of the subcommittee for working on this along with those of us on this side. I congratulate the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from Mississippi, for bringing this forward.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize how important these covert tests are to

protecting the country's transportation security systems. A single tip-off of a covert test is too many. We have already had three we know of. We must do our part to stop the next one from happening. We must do whatever we can to ensure that these tests remain covert and candid so we can truly evaluate our transportation security workers.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as we move forward on this important legislation that will make our transportation systems more secure. I ask my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5909, Catching Operational Vulnerabilities by Ensuring Random Testing Act of 2008, introduced by my distinguished colleague from New York, Representative LOWE. This important legislation will further shore up the gaps in our testing and evaluation protocols for transportation security.

As we've seen just in the past year, the details of covert tests and evaluations have been disseminated to the screener workforce, thereby "tipping-off' those we are trying to accurately and responsibly test. The Committee on Homeland Security has been extremely concerned about this issue and I have held hearings in the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, of which I am the chair, in order to examine what exactly has gone wrong.

Any efforts to compromise these important testing efforts, whether intentional or on accident, should not be tolerated. Some have claimed that one of these incidents—the April 2006 e-mail from TSA's Office of Security Operations that tipped TSA field staff off to covert tests—was unintentional, but evidence suggests otherwise. The April 2006 e-mail clearly referenced that individuals who were probing the system were Federal employees and even provided a physical description of one of the employees conducting the tests. This bill is necessary to prohibit individuals from providing advance notice of covert tests to any persons, unless authorized to do so by the Assistant Secretary of the Transportation Security Administration, the Inspector General of the Department, or the Comptroller General of the United States.

The COVERT Act of 2008 explicitly prohibits the advance notice or notification to individuals by those employees who are participating in a covert test or evaluation, which will ensure that the integrity of all covert testing efforts—across all modes of transportation—are protected, not just aviation. This legislation puts in place controls to monitor the testing personnel and the testing and evaluation procedures by building in accountability. It establishes the presence of a second team of covert test and evaluation employees with the first team in order to monitor and confirm their actions. Finally, the act requires an impact study to evaluate covert testing and evaluation and how it could be incorporated into other training and testing programs. The study is required to include: Recommendations on the implementation and execution of this section; an assessment on the results of covert testing; a summary of best practices on how to best integrate covert testing into other programs; and recommendations for additional personnel training necessary to fulfill this act. The study and report will also provide an assessment on the test and evaluation results and recommendations for personnel training required to fulfill the act.

Mr Speaker, if we choose to ignore these past disclosures, we provide future opportunities to compromise a worthy program intended to educate the workforce and benefit the security of our transportation systems throughout the country. One tip-off of a covert test is one too many. We've already had three that we know of. Let's do our part to stop any future tip-offs.

I am proud to support this incredibly important and timely legislation and I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5909, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1150) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Transportation Security Administration should, in accordance with the congressional mandate provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1150

Whereas the Transportation Security Administration is uniquely positioned to lead the efforts to secure our Nation's rail and mass transit lines from the threat of terrorism as a result of expertise developed through over five years of securing our Nation's commercial air transportation system;

Whereas the successes of the Transportation Security Administration's National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program has furthered the Transportation Security Administration's ability to provide security against terrorist attacks on the Nation's transportation systems by preventing and protecting against explosives threats;

Whereas each weekday 11,300,000 passengers depend on our Nation's mass transit lines as a means of transportation, and mass transit lines serve as an enticing target for terrorists as evidenced by the March 11, 2004, attack on the Madrid, Spain, mass transit system, the July 7, 2005, attack on the London, England, mass transit system, and the July 11, 2006, attack on the Mumbai, India, mass transit system;

Whereas each weekday more than 25 million children depend on our Nation's school transportation system, in addition to mass transit systems, to get to and from school and school activities, and the security of these systems must be enhanced to address the threat of terrorism; and

Whereas securing our Nation's rail and mass transit lines from terrorist attack and other security threats is essential due to their impact on our Nation's economic stability and the continued functioning of our national economy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Transportation Security Administration should—

(1) continue to enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines, as well as school transportation systems, including as provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53);

(2) continue development of the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program, which has proven to be an effective tool in securing against explosives threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines, with particular attention to the application of its training standards and the establishment of a reliable source of domestically-bred canines;

(3) improve upon the success of the Online Learning Center by providing increased person-to-person professional development programs to ensure those responsible for securing against terrorist attacks on our transportation systems are highly trained in both securing against terrorist attacks and professional relations with the traveling public; and

(4) continue to secure our Nation's mass transit and rail lines against terrorist attack and other security threats, so as to ensure the security of commuters on our Nation's mass transit lines and prevent the disruption of rail lines critical to our Nation's economy, and to give special attention to school transportation systems by working with school administrators, State and local law enforcement, and other representatives in the school transportation industry to keep children safe from terrorist attack.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this measure and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 1150 was introduced earlier this year by Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE. The resolution was marked up and adopted unanimously by the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection on May 1. The full committee approved it unanimously on May 20.

I would like to congratulate Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE who is both

the sponsor of the resolution and the subcommittee chairwoman. I strongly believe that this legislation fits well with the work that the committee has done on H.R. 1684, the DHS authorization bill that is pending before the Senate. As we approach the 1-year anniversary of H.R. 1, the Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007, there is much still to be done to secure rail and mass transit systems in the United States from the threat of terrorist attack.

Each weekday, 11.3 million passengers in 23 States use commuter heavy or light rail. History has shown that terrorists view rail and public transportation systems as attractive targets. In 2004, terrorist bombs tore through Madrid's rail system, killing and maiming hundreds of innocent commuters. Next month, of course, marks the third anniversary of the terrorist bombings of London's public transportation system. And just in the last 2 years, transportation systems in Mumbai, India, were attacked twice.

Since the 9/11 attacks, there has been justifiable attention paid to enhancing aviation security. However, the security needs for rail and public transportation have, at the same time, been largely neglected. Last year, we took steps toward ending the secondary status by passing H.R. 1. H.R. 1, now Public Law 110–53, includes wide-range surface transportation security provisions and authorizes $3.5 billion for transit security and $2 billion for rail security.

The legislation before us today, House Resolution 1150, renews the call for TSA to enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines. Specifically, it instructs TSA to strengthen security efforts towards rail lines, mass transit lines, and school transportation systems across the country. It also directs TSA to build on successful programs such as its canine detection and online learning programs, to expand the program's reach and to further strengthen transportation security across the country. TSA is uniquely positioned to be a leader in securing rail and mass transit systems from the threat of terrorism because of its experience in protecting commercial aviation.

Finally, I would note that House Resolution 1150 includes language authored by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) that gives appropriate consideration to the security needs of school transportation systems. This resolution continues the effort by the Committee on Homeland Security to raise rail and mass transit security to the prominence it deserves. I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 1150.

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1150 and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the chairman has said, we have worked, and the executive branch has worked, to enhance the security of this Nation since the terrible episode of 9/11. However, I think it would not surprise people to understand that we put primary focus on aviation safety since that was the means, that is aviation, that was utilized by the terrorists on 9/11.

We have done a good job with it. A couple of years ago, we passed the SAFE Port Act, which I think gave tremendous enhancement to the security measures that are utilized in our ports. This resolution recognizes that we need to do more in the area of rail and mass transit. I do not view that at as a criticism of anybody. Rather, I view that as a call to arms, so to speak, an urgency imprinted on the concern that we have in this area of potential vulnerability.

I would particularly point to the part of the resolution that states that TSA should continue to develop the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program and to utilize it with respect to our Nation's rail and mass transit line. One of the things that I think we have realized, on both sides of the aisle, is the tremendous capabilities of canines and the application of canine teams in a number of different areas of security in a number of different transportation modes.

I would say that I would hope that at some point in time, we might also be able to bring to the floor legislation dealing with the trucking industry. There is bipartisan commitment to do that. The gentleman from Mississippi has had a bill that a number of us have worked on, along with the gentlelady from Texas and others, that would enhance the security nature of our trucking system and would, at the same time, make careful distinctions between security-sensitive materials and otherwise hazardous materials. And that distinction would therefore not disadvantage certain drivers in the United States that otherwise might be prohibited from being able to drive hazardous material that is not security sensitive. I know the gentleman from Mississippi and the gentlelady from Texas are committed to that. I hope that we might be able to see some progress on that in the future as well.

Again, I think this resolution is worthy of support by all in this Chamber.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the gentleman that he will see some progress on the trucking legislation in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas, the author of the resolution, Ms. JACKSON-LEE.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me thank the chairman of the full committee for his leadership and the consistency of the methodical pathway to securing America. That is what we are doing here today. I want to acknowledge the ranking member of the committee and my ranking member, Mr. LUNGREN of California, because we have worked together as a committee to focus on a number of issues, including chemical security and an overview of infrastructure protection and now this legislation.

□ 1200

I also think it is important to note that we have committed, as the chairman has indicated, that we will look at the security measures needed for the trucking industry.

But we should get a sense of the roadmap that is being created here on the floor today. And as we look at the bills that we have discussed, each one of them are building blocks toward the response to the 9/11 families, who, day after day after 9/11 told this Congress to get its act together, starting first, of course, with the bill of Congresswoman CLARKE that emphasizes that if we have a watch list, that watch list should be a watch list that is both accurate and secure, and that hard working Americans have to have their civil liberties protected, so if they are on the list by mistake we must avoid or find a process of appeal for the mistakes that are being made.

Then, of course, I think it is noteworthy, as the chairman brought forward his bill on biometric, that we found incidences in Chicago where these cards that are being used by airport employees were fraudulently produced and large numbers of them found, a cache of them found in the hands of employees, so that people who are not credentialed can get on the airport surface because of this fraudulence. So this biometric study is extremely important.

Having just come back from Boston Logan Airport, we also note that the bill by Congresswoman LOWEY is very important, so that we are on our toes about ensuring that those who are working at these airports are not tipped off about testing or having them go through security, so that the four corners of airports are secure.

Now we come full circle, and this legislation, H. Res. 1150, goes back again to the heart of the purpose of the 9/11 Commission. It was a holistic approach to security, for we have seen the tragedy of being lax on airport security.

And I might imagine that those of you who are visiting the United States Congress who might have taken airplanes have gone through security, and it might have been a crowded line. But you are adhering to the rules because you know that we are working together to secure the homeland.

But the homeland is more than just aviation. It is also rail. And this legislation is part of the approach that the Homeland Security Committee is taking, and seriously taking, as its responsibilities of oversight.

Each weekday, 11,300,000 passengers depend on our Nation's mass transit

lines as a means of transportation. Our Nation's mass transit lines serve as a target for terrorist attacks, as evidenced by the March 11, 2004, attack on the Madrid, Spain, mass transit system; the July 7, 2005, attack on the London, England, mass transit system; and the July 11, 2006, attack on the Mumbai, India, mass transit system.

These systems are vulnerable, and the TSA Administration through the development of its National Explosive Detection Canine Team Program furthered its ability to provide security against terrorist attacks on the Nation's transportation systems by preventing and protecting our explosive threats.

However, it is important for the administration and the Transportation Security Administration to be reminded of the Nation's rail and mass transit lines, that they should remain secure from terrorist attack, as they are critical in the functioning of our Nation's economy and they serve as a means of transportation on a daily basis for millions of hard working Americans.

So this legislation is a wake-up call. It is in fact to remind the administration that we have to do more work on transportation security inasmuch as we have seen done by others.

In 1995, the Irish Republican Army waged a long-running terrorist campaign against the London Underground.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California). The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I yield an additional minute to the gentlewoman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 1 additional minute.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Palestinian terrorists have carried out suicide bombings on Israeli buses. And so this legislation is to emphasize again that attacks on mass transit are possible and therefore we should look seriously at providing the security necessary.

Just recently I held a field hearing in New York to look at the ways of the New York transit system and how they were securing their particular system, one of the largest in the Nation. We learned that the National Explosive Detection Canine Team Program was very important, and therefore we want the TSA to continue that. We need TSA to continue to develop training programs for frontline workers and fulfill the other mandates Congress put in place in the 9/11 bill to increase security on rail and mass transit. This resolution is to provide that roadmap and to emphasize to TSA how important mass transit security is.

Might I just conclude by suggesting as my colleagues have discussed this whole question of energy, just think about a secure mass transit that will allow us to engage in a transit system that actually works.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I yield 1 additional minute to the gentlewoman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Texas is recognized for 1 additional minute.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished chairman.

A secure mass transit will encourage more Americans to utilize our transit and our transportation system that is a public transit system. That is what those of us on this side of the aisle believe, a green economy, conservation, efficiency. And coming from Texas I would say to my good friend from California, we have happily lived with safe and secure and environmentally safe drilling and we encourage our very strong companies to continue to do so. But, at the same time, the word ''energy'' is a broad term. Green energy, efficiency, conservation. That is what this Congress has to preach to the American public, and safe and secure mass transit, of which all of these legislative initiatives are planning to do.

I would ask my colleagues in particular to support the legislation presently under consideration dealing with the mass transit resolution and all the other bills that have been able to come forward out of Homeland Security and under the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 1150, Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Transportation Security Administration should, in accordance with the congressional mandate provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines, introduced by myself. I rise today to offer this Resolution regarding the role of the Transportation Security Administration in securing our Nation's rail and mass transit lines.

This Resolution reaffirms the congressional mandate provided for in the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 that the Transportation Security Administration enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines. I am pleased to have Homeland Security Committee Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON, as an original cosponsor of this resolution. Chairman THOMPSON has been a leader in our efforts to secure against terrorist threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines.

Madam Speaker, each weekday 11,300,000 passengers depend on our Nation's mass transit lines as a means of transportation. Our Nation's mass transit lines serve as a target for terrorist attack as evidenced by the March 11, 2004, attack on the Madrid, Spain, mass transit system, the July 7, 2005, attack on the London, England, mass transit system, and the July 11, 2006, attack on the Mumbai, India, mass transit system. The Transportation Security Administration has, through the development of its National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program furthered its ability to provide security against terrorist attacks on the Nation's transportation systems by preventing and protecting against explosives threats.

It is imperative that our Nation's rail and mass transit lines remain secure from terrorist attack as they are critical to the functioning of our Nation's economy and serve as a means of transportation on a daily basis for millions of hard working Americans. Successful attacks against rail and mass transit targets have been carried out worldwide by terrorist looking to create havoc, economic harm, and kill innocent people.

Throughout the world, mass transit systems have long been targets of terrorist attacks. Algerian extremists set off bombs on the subways of Paris in 1995 and 1996; the Irish Republican Army waged a long-running terrorist campaign against the London Underground; Palestinian terrorists have carried out suicide bombings on Israel's buses; Chechnyan terrorists killed 40 people by bombing the Moscow subway in 2004; and, in the first terrorist use of a chemical weapon, a Japanese cult—Aum Shinrykyo—released sarin gas on a Tokyo subway in 1995.

Recent events make it clear that the threat continues. On the morning of March 11, 2004, ten explosions occurred at the height of the Madrid rush hour aboard four commuter trains. On July 7, 2005, during the morning peak travel hours, three separate explosions ripped through the London Underground and a fourth explosion occurred on a double-decker bus. These four explosions, the result of coordinated suicide-bombings by British-born Islamic extremists, claimed the lives of 56 people and seriously injured hundreds more. Two weeks later, on July 21, 2005, another group of terrorists unsuccessfully attempted to attack London's mass transit system again. On July 11, 2006 a series of seven bomb blasts against the Suburban Railway in Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, capital city of the Indian state of Maharashtra and India's financial capital resulted in 207 lost lives and over 700 injured.

The recent attacks serve as a harsh reminder of mass transit and rail security vulnerabilities. Both mass transit and rail systems are public and used by millions of people daily. Because of their size, openness, and highly-networked character, there are no obvious checkpoints, like those at airports, to inspect passengers and parcels. Passengers are strangers, promising attackers anonymity and easy escape.

And attacks on mass transit—the circulatory systems of urban areas—can cause widespread fear, severely disrupt economic activity, kill or injure large numbers of people, and alter our way of life. An attack on our freight rail, either the material being transported, such as hazardous materials, or vital commodities, or merely the system itself, could severely impact our national economy.

As a result, both mass transit and rail systems are attractive targets. Since September 11, 2001, according to the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, mass transit systems have been the target of more than 145 terrorist attacks.

Due to their existence in high-population, high-risk urban areas, mass transit systems are also inevitably affected by any terrorist attack that may occur within that jurisdiction—regardless of whether the transit system was the

target of the attack. For example, during September 11, 2001, two of New York City's busiest transit stations were lost and considerable damage occurred to the tunnel structures, endangering hundreds of lives underground. Great care was required to evacuate passengers, locate and rescue trapped transit cars, and communicate instructions. The damage in New York City was so great that in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Congress appropriated $1.8 billion to rebuild the subway infrastructure that was damaged in the attacks. I am hopeful that through this legislation we can prevent such attacks rather than face the tragic consequences of 9/11 again.

I refuse to sit idly by and allow another 9/11 or Madrid, London, or Mumbai bombing to disrupt our Nation and its critical infrastructure—it is with that conviction that I seek to address these issues. The recent world events should serve as a wake-up call that we must do more to secure our transportation systems and we must act quickly and responsibly. I firmly believe that the legislation before us today will take an important step in securing our transportation systems.

Pursuant to the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001, ATSA, the Transportation Security Administration, TSA, is responsible for the security of all modes of transportation including rail and mass transit. TSA, however, has focused the majority of its resources and assets on aviation security in the past five years. I could go on with other examples, but what these instances show is that clearly it is imperative that TSA value rail and mass transit security on equal footing with aviation security. We are satisfied with the progress that TSA has made with the National Explosion Detection Team Program, but more is needed to train frontline employees.

Congress, recognizing TSA's lack of progress in developing a security strategy for all modes of transportation, mandated the development of a National Strategy for Transportation Security in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, 9/11 Act. This strategy, although due April 1, 2005, was not finalized by TSA until September 2005. Moreover, the document provided by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) did not meet the requirements set out by Congress, especially with regards to rail and mass transit security. Furthermore, subsequent congressionally mandated updates were also not met by TSA, resulting in the 9/11 Discourse Project giving the TSA a C− for its efforts.

TSA's failure to assume a leadership position on surface transportation security is plainly evident. It is time that we take action and leadership to help protect the more than 11.3 million passengers in 35 metropolitan areas and 22 states who use commuter, heavy, or light rail each weekday. There must be substantial penalties for those who do not follow the security plans, vulnerability assessments, and regulations set out in this legislation.

H. Res. 1150 is a straightforward resolution, but a very important one. Recognizing that TSA is the lead agency for transportation security, and all of the hard work Congress did last year to make rail and mass transit security programs more robust in the enactment of the 9/11 bill, we must continue to push TSA to fulfill the mandates for rail and mass transit security required by Congress.

Last month, the Subcommittee on Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection, which I have the privilege of chairing, held a field hearing in New York City on efforts to secure rail and mass transit. It was a truly edifying experience. We learned much about what is being done to secure the New York Transit system and other systems across the Nation, and what TSA can do in its leadership role at the federal level, to facilitate these efforts. I want to commend TSA on its progress with the National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program, since most successful attacks on rail and mass transit are carried out using IEDs. However, we need TSA to continue to develop training programs for frontline workers, and fulfill the other mandates Congress put in place in the 9/11 bill to increase security on rail and mass transit.

TSA should reinvigorate their efforts to fulfill the mandates of the 9/11 bill. TSA has not submitted to the Committee on Homeland Security the National Strategy for Public Transportation Security which was mandated by the 9/11 bill, along with other deadlines including training regulations for frontline workers. TSA must submit this to both comply with the law and more importantly to protect Americans.

I find it completely appalling that this Administration seems to be unwilling to act on rail and mass transit security until we are faced with another disaster. I shudder to think that if the Washington, DC or New York subway systems were attacked, and mass casualties resulted, that we would be thinking that more could have been done to prevent such a tragedy. We will be desperately trying to figure out how to prepare for a disaster that has already happened and holding hearing after hearing to find out where we dropped the ball. The time to prepare is now, and I am committed to securing our Nation's rail and mass transit system expeditiously. We have been blessed thus far that our rail and public transportation systems have not been attacked. We should make our best efforts to ensure that we do not overlook this blessing.

From the terrorist attacks that have occurred around the world, we know that terrorists will target our rail and public transportation systems. Despite this admonition, the agency created and funded by Congress to address the issue of transportation security has consistently dropped the ball when it comes to rail and public transportation. We cannot let the lessons of Madrid, London, and Mumbai go unheeded. For the sake of the millions of Americans who use our rail and mass transit systems everyday to go to work, school, and visit friends and family, we have to take charge on this security risk.

We owe it to the public to safeguard the modes of transportation that allow them to carry on with their lives and drive this economy. Millions of men and women ride our Nation's rail and public transportation systems everyday; we owe it to them to ensure that they can do so safely and securely. I hope that through today's hearing and our continued efforts on the issue of rail and mass transit security, we can resolve the asymmetric way in which we treat aviation versus rail security and resolve the substantial threat posed by inadequate security on our rail and mass transit system.

I want to thank my colleagues for all of their hard work and dedication to these important issues.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), who has a real interest in broadening the scope of this study.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Mississippi for yielding.

I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for introducing this important piece of legislation.

As has been indicated, every day over 36 million people travel on forms of mass transit or public transportation in this country. More than 11 million commuters use rail and mass transit, while over twice this number, more than 25 million, use public or private school buses to travel to and from their schools.

As a former superintendent of schools of the State of North Carolina, I know how important these systems are to delivering our most precious cargo, our school children, to and from school safely and securely. Just as we have a responsibility to ensure the public can travel on rail and mass transit confident of their safety, we have an equal responsibility to make sure that our school bus routes are secure.

I thank Congresswoman JACKSON-LEE for her hard work, Chairman THOMPSON for working with me to include this piece of legislation in this resolution, and I want to thank Ranking Member KING for his help also.

School buses have been targets for terrorists not only in countries such as Israel, Thailand, Yemen and African countries, but also Canada and the United States. Last year, the FBI warned that members of extremist groups have purchased school buses and obtained licenses to operate them.

An attack on a school bus would be devastating, not only in lives harmed, but also the psychological and symbolic impact. We owe our children and their families no less than that we will be able to confidently say that their transportation is secure.

Earlier this year in a 9/11 bill, Congress required TSA to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment on school transportation. They are making progress on this goal. We need to make sure that this assessment is completed on time and that it is followed with efforts to keep our children safe as they travel to and from school activities.

The provisions of this resolution shows that Congress is serious about providing that confidence for rail, for mass transit, as well as for school transportation. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 1150.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers. If the gentleman from California has no more speakers, I am prepared to close after the gentleman closes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to close.

Madam Speaker, I rise again in support of H. Res. 1150, expressing the

sense of the House of Representatives that TSA should in accordance with the congressional mandate provided for in implementing recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007, enhance security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our Nation's rail and mass transit lines.

I think we have already spoken about why this is important, why we need to move in this area, as we have moved in effectively in the areas of aviation safety and port and marine safety. We cannot leave out any element of our overall programs. And I thank the gentleman from Mississippi, the chairman, for informing me that we should expect to see some action on legislation dealing with the trucking industry, a goal that he and I share.

Madam Speaker, as I have reflected on much of the rail industry, I have noticed that they are powered oftentimes by diesel engines. As I have reflected on mass transit in most of our intercity and intercity communities where we are dealing with buses, I have noted that they have been powered by diesel. In some cases for environmental purposes we have encouraged the use of natural gas.

That is why, Madam Speaker, it is disappointing to see that we have made it more difficult and more expensive for those who operate those buses and operate those trains to continue to operate because of the increasingly high energy costs. I have been informed that my home State of California has a substantial portion of its electricity that is produced by way of natural gas. So when we talk about the need, the demand, it seems to me we should also look at the supply side equation as well.

Not even talking about offshore potential for oil and gas, we should look at onshore oil and gas and the potential for creating more product, American product, for these mass transit systems that we are talking about here today with this bill.

So, if we would just look at total onshore oil and gas, not including oil shale, we would find this: Onshore Federal lands contain an estimated 31 billion barrels of oil and 231 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. I am not misstating that. That is 31 billion barrels of oil and 231 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, those figures according to the Bureau of Land Management. The Federal Government currently denies or restricts by way of congressional mandate, denies or restricts access to 92 percent of this oil and 90 percent of this natural gas.

In other words, we are saying to the American people who want to use these mass transit systems as well as use their own automobiles, that the very source that provides the energy for those modes of transportation, that is oil and natural gas, we are going to deny 28.5 billion barrels of the oil and 207.9 trillion cubic feet of this natural gas.

Now, it is beyond the scope of this bill perhaps to talk about heating. We are going to be in winter, even though it seems difficult in some of these sweltering summer days or pre-summer days to think about that, but we will be in winter when we are talking about the heating needs of the American people, and we should look at the price of natural gas, as it is going up and on up and up, as are our gas prices.

Only 8 percent, that is 2.48 billion barrels of the oil out of the potential 31 billion barrels of oil, and 10 percent of the natural gas, 23.1 trillion cubic feet of the 231 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, are accessible under standard leasing terms.

So what we have done to the American people by way of congressional action is say that we are only going to allow you to have access to 8 percent of the oil and 10 percent of the natural gas. Or another way of saying it is we are going to lock up 92 percent of the oil and 90 percent of the natural gas, even though you are desperate in terms of the impact of energy price increases on your everyday living.

□ 1215

It's not just at the gas pump, it is as it trickles through or ripples through the entire economy. Every bit of food that we buy today is transported from somewhere else, so the costs of transportation are going to be included in the cost of food to the American people. As we talk to the need for us to enhance our security against terrorist attack and other security threats to our rail and mass transit lines, let's understand the national security implications of denying those very lines, rail and mass transit lines, the energy that they need to move.

Again, I support H. Res. 1150 as a bipartisan product of the Homeland Security Committee, which, I think we can proudly say, works on a bipartisan basis.

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

House Resolution 1150 sends the right message at the right time. It reminds TSA of the House's continued interest in seeing progress on securing our rail and mass transit systems.

Last year we took steps towards that goal by passing H.R. 1 legislation, that I was proud to author. That landmark Homeland Security law took a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges of securing rail and mass transit, viewing it as a critical infrastructure that is essential to effective operations of our national economy.

Incidentally, with gas over $4 a gallon, America's reliance on these systems is only going to increase. Today I am proud to stand here and renew the call for meaningful progress and urge passage of H. Res. 1150.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1150, 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.

NATIONAL BOMBING PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4749) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Office for Bombing Prevention, to address terrorist explosive threats, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4749

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 ''National Bombing Prevention Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. BOMBING PREVENTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle A of title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 121 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

''SEC. 210F. OFFICE FOR BOMBING PREVENTION.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish within the Protective Security Coordination Division of the Office of Infrastructure Protection of the Department an Office for Bombing Prevention (in this section referred to as 'the Office').

''(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Office shall have the primary responsibility for enhancing the ability, and coordinating the efforts, of the United States to deter, detect, prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States, including by—

''(1) serving as the lead agency of the Department for ensuring that programs designed to counter terrorist explosive attacks in the United States function together efficiently to meet the evolving threat from explosives and improvised explosive devices;

''(2) coordinating national and intergovernmental bombing prevention activities to ensure those activities work toward achieving common national goals;

''(3) conducting analysis of the capabilities and requirements necessary for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to deter, prevent, detect, protect against, and assist in any response to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States by—

''(A) maintaining a national analysis database on the capabilities of bomb squads, explosive detection canine teams, tactics teams, and public safety dive teams; and

''(B) applying the analysis derived from the database described in subparagraph (A) in—

''(i) evaluating progress toward closing identified gaps relating to national strategic goals and standards; and

''(ii) informing decisions relating to homeland security policy, assistance, training, research, development efforts, testing and evaluation, and related requirements;

''(4) promoting secure information sharing of sensitive material and promoting security awareness, including by—

''(A) operating and maintaining a secure information sharing system that allows the sharing of critical information relating to terrorist

explosive attack tactics, techniques, and procedures;

''(B) educating the public and private sectors about explosive precursor chemicals;

''(C) working with international partners, in coordination with the Office for International Affairs of the Department, to develop and share effective practices to deter, prevent, detect, protect, and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States; and

''(D) executing national public awareness and vigilance campaigns relating to terrorist explosive threats, preventing explosive attacks, and activities and measures underway to safeguard the United States;

''(5) assisting State, local, and tribal governments in developing multi-jurisdictional improvised explosive devices security plans for high-risk jurisdictions;

''(6) helping to ensure, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Science and Technology and the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the identification and availability of effective technology applications through field pilot testing and acquisition of such technology applications by Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to deter, prevent, detect, protect, and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States;

''(7) coordinating the efforts of the Department relating to, and assisting departments and agencies of Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, and private sector business in, developing and implementing national explosives detection training, certification, and performance standards;

''(8) ensuring the implementation of any recommendations in the national strategy required under section 210G, including developing, maintaining, and tracking progress toward achieving objectives to reduce the vulnerability of the United States to terrorist explosive attacks;

''(9) developing, in coordination with the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, programmatic guidance and permitted uses for bombing prevention activities funded by homeland security assistance administered by the Department; and

''(10) establishing and executing a public awareness campaign to inform the general public and private sector businesses on ways they can deter, detect, prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States, that—

''(A) utilizes a broad spectrum of both mainstream and specialty print, radio, television outlets, and the Internet;

''(B) utilizes small and disadvantaged businesses, as defined under the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.); and

''(C) ensures that the public awareness messages under the campaign reach and are understandable to underserved populations, including—

''(i) persons with physical and mental disabilities, health problems, visual impairments, hearing impairments, limited English proficiency, and literacy barriers;

''(ii) socially and economically disadvantaged households and communities;

''(iii) the elderly; and

''(iv) children.

''(c) LIMITATION ON STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or the Attorney General of the United States.

''(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

''(A) $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;

''(B) $25,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2010 through 2012; and

''(C) such sums as may be necessary for each subsequent fiscal year.

''(2) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts made available pursuant to paragraph (1) are authorized to remain available until expended.

''(e) ENHANCEMENT OF EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES.—To enhance the Nation's explosives detection canine resources and capabilities the Secretary of Homeland Security shall, by partnering with other Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities including historically black colleges and universities and minority serving institutions, and the private sector—

''(1) within 270 days after the date of the enactment of this subsection—

''(A) develop a pilot program that includes a domestic breeding program for purpose-bred explosives detection canines; and

''(B) increase the current number of capability assessments of explosives detection canine units to identify common challenges and gaps in canine explosives detection, to provide for effective domestic preparedness and collective response to terrorism, and to inform grant guidance and priorities, consistent with national capabilities database efforts;

''(2) continue development of a scientifically-based training curriculum to enhance consensus-based national training and certification standards to provide for effective domestic preparedness and collective response to terrorism through the effective use of explosives detection canines for explosives detection canines; and

''(3) continue engagement in explosives detection canine research and development activities through partnerships with the Science and Technology Directorate and the Technical Support Working Group.

"SEC. 210G. NATIONAL STRATEGY.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and periodically update a national strategy to prevent and prepare for terrorist explosive attacks in the United States.

''(b) DEVELOPMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall develop the national strategy required under subsection (a).

''(c) REPORTING.—Not later than six months after the date of the submission of the report regarding each quadrennial homeland security review conducted under section 707, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report regarding the national strategy required under subsection (a), which shall include recommendations, if any, for deterring, preventing, detecting, protecting against, and responding to terrorist attacks in the United States using explosives or improvised explosive devices, including any such recommendations relating to coordinating the efforts of Federal, State, local, and tribal governments, emergency response providers, and the private sector.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 210E the following new items:

''Sec. 210F. Office for Bombing Prevention.

''Sec. 210G. National strategy.''.

SEC. 3. EXPLOSIVES TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFER.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 181 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

"SEC. 318. EXPLOSIVES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and in coordination with the Under Secretary for National Protection and Programs, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Defense, and the head of any other relevant Federal department or agency, shall ensure coordination and information sharing regarding nonmilitary research, development, testing, and evaluation activities of the Federal Government relating to the detection and prevention of, protection against, and response to terrorist attacks in the United States using explosives or improvised explosive devices, and the development of tools and technologies necessary to neutralize and disable explosive devices.

''(b) LEVERAGING MILITARY RESEARCH.—The Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and in coordination with the Under Secretary for National Protection and Programs, shall coordinate with the Secretary of Defense and the head of any other relevant Federal department or agency to ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, military policies and procedures, and research, development, testing, and evaluation activities relating to the detection and prevention of, protection against, and response to terrorist attacks using explosives or improvised explosive devices, and the development of tools and technologies necessary to neutralize and disable explosive devices, are adapted to nonmilitary uses.

"SEC. 319. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, and in coordination with the Under Secretary for National Protection and Programs, shall establish a technology transfer program to facilitate the identification, modification, and commercialization of technology and equipment for use by Federal, State, and local governmental agencies, emergency response providers, and the private sector to deter, prevent, detect, protect, and respond to terrorist attacks in the United States using explosives or improvised explosive devices.

''(b) PROGRAM.—The activities under the program established under subsection (a) shall include—

''(1) applying the analysis conducted under section 210F(b)(3) of the capabilities and requirements of bomb squad, explosive detection canine teams, tactical teams, and public safety dive teams of Federal, State, and local governments, to determine the training and technology requirements for Federal, State, and local governments, emergency response providers, and the private sector;

''(2) identifying available technologies designed to deter, prevent, detect, protect, or respond to terrorist attacks using explosives or improvised explosive devices that have been, or are in the process of being, developed, tested, evaluated, or demonstrated by the Department, other Federal agencies, the private sector, foreign governments, or international organizations;

''(3) reviewing whether a technology described in paragraph (2) may be useful in assisting Federal, State, or local governments, emergency response providers, or the private sector in detecting, deterring, preventing, or responding to terrorist attacks using explosives or improvised explosive devices; and

''(4) communicating to Federal, State, and local governments, emergency response providers, and the private sector the availability of any technology described in paragraph (2), including providing the specifications of any such technology, indicating whether any such technology satisfies appropriate standards, and identifying grants, if any, available from the Department to purchase any such technology.

''(c) WORKING GROUP.—To facilitate the transfer of military technologies, the Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, and in a manner consistent with protection of sensitive sources and methods, shall establish a working group to advise and assist in the identification of military technologies designed to deter, prevent, detect, protect, or respond to terrorist explosive attacks that are in the process of being developed, or are developed, by the Department of Defense or the private sector.''.

(b) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of

the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101 et seq.) is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 317 the following new items: ''Sec. 318. Explosives research and development. ''Sec. 319. Technology transfer.''.

SEC. 4. GAO STUDY OF EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE TEAMS.

Section 1307(f) of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (Public Law 110–53; 121 Stat. 395) is amended by striking ''utilization'' and all that follows through the end of the sentence and inserting ''utilization of explosives detection canine teams, by the Transportation Security Administration and all other agencies of the Department of Homeland Security that utilize explosives detection canines, to strengthen security and the capacity of explosive detection canine detection teams of the Department.''.

SEC. 5. REPORT ON CANINE PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES.

The Secretary of Homeland Security shall submit a report to the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate by not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act examining the administration of canine procurement activities by the Department of Homeland Security to deter, prevent, detect, and protect against terrorist explosive attacks in the United States, that includes consideration of the feasibility of reducing the price paid for the procurement of untrained canines, including by utilizing an expanded pool of breeds, procuring canines from domestic breeders, and acquiring canines from animal shelters, rescue societies, and other not-for-profit entities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Explosives remain the preferred weapon of choice for terrorists the world over. Explosives have been used against this Nation abroad and on American soil. Because explosives, be they military grade or homemade, improvised explosive devices are easy to obtain and use, the explosives threat needs a focused, coordinated approach.

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attack, a great deal of attention was paid to the emerging threats, such as chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, needed focus on the explosives threat has been lacking, despite the issuance of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 19, Combating Terrorist Use of Explosives in the United States, in February 2007. H.R. 4749, the National Bombing Prevention Act of 2008, will help fill this gap.

The legislation that the gentleman from Long Island (Mr. KING) and I introduced was considered in committee in May. It was improved at full committee markup with the addition of some key amendments and reported unanimously by our committee.

This is a straightforward bipartisan bill. It establishes the Office of Bombing Prevention within the Office of Infrastructure Protection at the Department of Homeland Security.

As with other bills we have brought to the floor today, I strongly believe that this bill fits well with the priorities found in H.R. 1684, the DHS authorization bill that is pending before the Senate.

The Office of Bombing Prevention, in fact, already exists in the Department. This bill simply authorizes it and sets forth its responsibilities in law. The bill authorizes $10 million for FY 2009, a little over the administration's budget request.

For fiscal years 2010 through 2012, the bill authorizes $25 million annually. Then, for each subsequent fiscal year, such sums as may be necessary are provided. The Office is responsible for coordinating the government efforts to deter, detect, prevent, protect against and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States.

To do so, the Office is required to conduct analysis of the Federal, State, local and tribal government capabilities and maintain a national database on the capabilities of bomb squads, explosive detection, canine teams, tactic teams and public safety dive teams around the Nation.

Additionally, the bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and periodically update a national strategy to prevent and prepare for terrorist explosive attacks in the United States. A national strategy is also required under HSPD 19.

H.R. 4749 also authorizes the Office to support efforts, as well as research, into explosives detection and mitigation. An informed public is a prepared public. In this spirit, the bill directs the Office to develop and implement a public awareness campaign that can reach the private sector as well as ordinary citizens.

Finally, the bill ensures that we understand and enhance bomb detection through the proper training and use of canine detection units. For all these reasons, I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2008.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology in H.R. 4749, the National Bombing Prevention Act of 2008. H.R. 4749 was introduced by Congressman Peter T. King on December 1, 2007, and the bill was subsequently marked up by the Committee on Homeland Security on May 20, 2008.

H.R. 4749 implicates the Committee on Science and Technology's jurisdiction over Homeland Security research and development under Rule X(1)(o)(14) of the House Rules. The Committee on Science and Technology acknowledges the importance of H.R. 4749 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over this bill, I agree not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces, or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology, and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the Congressional Record when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Committee on Science and Technology also expects that you will support our request to be conferees during any House-Senate conference on H.R. 4749 or similar legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2008.

Hon. BART GORDON,
Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 4749, the National Bombing Prevention Act of 2008.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 4749 contains provisions that fall under the jurisdictional interests of the Committee on Science and Technology. I appreciate your agreement to not seek a sequential referral of this legislation and I acknowledge that your decision to forgo a sequential referral does not waive, alter, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology.

Further, I recognize that your Committee reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees on the bill for the portions of the bill that are within your jurisdiction and I agree to support such a request.

I will ensure that this exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 4749, the National Bombing Prevention Act of 2008. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, before I begin I would ask that the RECORD include a letter from the National Tactical Officers Association to Congressman KING and Congressman ROGERS in support of this bill.

NATIONAL TACTICAL
OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Doylestown, PA, January 27, 2008.

Hon. PETER T. KING,
Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE ROGERS,
Committee Member, Homeland Security and the House Armed Services Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KING AND CONGRESSMAN ROGERS: The National Tactical Officers Association strongly supports Congressman King's Bill (HR4749) amending the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to establish the Office for Bombing Prevention and addressing terrorist explosive threats. We also continue to support Senator Collins' and Senator Lieberman's Bill (S2292) to increase funding for the Department of Homeland Security Office for Bombing Prevention. Both amendments provide important resources against the use of terrorist improvised Explosive Devices, including coordination of national and intergovernmental bombing prevention activities, requirements, capabilities, gap analysis and information sharing and awareness.

The Department of Homeland Security Office for Bombing Prevention coordinates national and intergovernmental bombing prevention activities in our national bombing prevention posture and runs information sharing and awareness programs for State and local governments, law enforcement, first responders, the private sector and the public. As recently demonstrated in Glasgow, London and in daily news reports from Iraq and Afghanistan, terrorist use of IEDs is a primary threat. We commend you for your support and your leadership in focusing the attention of the House and the nation on this serious issue and on the role of the Department of Homeland Security Office for Bombing Prevention in leading national efforts to prevent the use of explosives by terrorists in the United States.

The NTOA is the professional association for law enforcement personnel, sworn correctional officers, tactical emergency medical personnel, military police and special operations personnel who specialize in the resolution of critical incidents. Since 1983, NTOA has worked to provide professional education, training and research for law enforcement personnel engaged in tactical missions and currently has over 30,000 members representing over 1,600 police agencies. NTOA has worked with the Department of Homeland Security Office for Bombing Prevention to integrate SWAT and bomb squad personnel and capabilities to protect soft targets against threats for an armed adversary using explosive devices, as seen in the 2004 Beslan School attack in Russia. OBP provides an invaluable resource to State and local law enforcement through the Tripwire system which allows responders to access an unprecedented library of information and analysis on terrorist IED tactics, techniques and procedures. TRlPwire provides SWAT operators with the knowledge needed to identify explosive hazards, including IED components and potential terrorist tactics, during high risk operations.

The Department of Homeland Security's Office for Bombing Prevention has been an exemplary partner for its State and local stakeholders in the bombing prevention and law enforcement communities. The National Tactical Officers Association applauds Senator Collins, Senator Lieberman, Representative Rogers and yourself for your support for the bombing prevention community.

Sincerely,

JOHN GNAGEY,
Executive Director.

Madam Speaker, the ranking member of Homeland Security, PETER KING of New York, introduced this bill to authorize the Office of Bombing Prevention within the Department of Homeland Security. He would obviously be here were he not attending the family funeral for Tim Russert, and I am here in his stead.

The Office of Bombing Prevention provides the necessary analysis and coordination of our Nation's bomb prevention capability to best protect our citizens from the threat posed by explosive materials. We only need to look at terrorist activities overseas to understand that conventional and improvised explosive devices, IEDs, are a terrorist's weapon of choice against military and civilian targets.

Within the United States, we have been subject to our own share of explosive attacks, including the 1993 World Trade Center bombings, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, the Centennial Olympic Park bombing, among others. State and local authorities have developed the capabilities to respond to potential explosive threats and to neutralize them.

As a matter of fact, these are among the bravest men and women that we have as our first responders. Yet without the office established in this bill, there would be no analysis of our nationwide capability to respond to explosive threats, or where gaps exist in training, equipment and personnel against a national baseline.

This analysis will assist State and local officials in applying for Homeland Security grants to fill these gaps. As has been mentioned many times on this floor, there has been a bipartisan effort through our committee to ensure that we take a risk-based approach to the terrorist threat. It makes the most sense. It is one that both sides of the aisle have been committed to, and this enables that even further.

Furthermore, this legislation will authorize the Office to continue to promote information sharing and IED security awareness through advanced bomb prevention techniques and usable information. The Office uses a secure Web site known as TRIPwire to provide to bomb prevention officials across the country access to current terrorist IED tactics, techniques and procedures, along with expert analysis and reports, making it a one-stop shop for actionable information.

As we all know, our troops have had extensive experience with IEDs in Iraq and Afghanistan. This legislation instructs the Secretary of Homeland Security to work closely with the Department of Defense to take advantage of what our troops have learned on the battlefield, both in tactics and technology, to improve the capability of our first responders here at home.

Preventing a bomb from going off should involve more than just those first responders attempting to neutralize the threat once the bomb has been placed. Education and awareness programs regarding the threat of IEDs are also included in this legislation to ensure information on explosive precursors is provided to merchants so that they can recognize suspicious purchases.

Additionally, this legislation includes an amendment from our committee colleague, MIKE ROGERS of Alabama, to improve the canine explosive detection teams in use around the country. These canine teams are invaluable resources to detect and deter IED attacks before they occur.

It is important to note that this office is not designed to replace existing elements of counter-explosive expertise already found in the Federal Government, but, rather, to assist in coordinating State, local and tribal capability. In fact, as I said, the National Tactical Officers Association supports this legislation in the letter that has been entered into the RECORD.

The need for this Office of Bombing Prevention is clear. Therefore, I urge all of my colleagues to support passage of H.R. 4749.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I also thank the ranking member.

Madam Speaker, the people of America can be proud today of what this committee is doing. They can be exceedingly proud of the bipartisanship that is being displayed between the current chairman and the former chairman, both of whom have worked tirelessly to bring this piece of legislation to fruition, so I think that today, the people of Mississippi and the people of New York should span the chasm and understand that bipartisanship is alive and well because of representatives that they have sent to the Congress of the United States of America.

I am honored to support and encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. It does establish an Office of Bombing Prevention, and if the truth be told, whatever amount of money we spend on this legislation will be money well spent, money well spent. Protecting the American people from persons who would perform dastardly deeds is an absolute necessity of the government of the United States of America.

I am honored to say that the ranking member, without objection, and the chairman allowed a piece of legislation, this piece of legislation, to be amended so that we could have a public awareness campaign so that the public could be a part of protecting itself. If the public is aware of the methodologies that are being utilized by those who would perform insidious acts, the public can help us to defend ourselves.

This legislation requires this public awareness campaign. It will reach small businesses, it will reach the very large businesses. It also will, in an effort to reach all, make sure people are

reached who are physically challenged, those who are mentally challenged, those who may have some language deficiencies. In fact, in my district the ballot is printed in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. We must make sure that all persons have an opportunity to receive the education and the information that this bill requires that we impart to the public.

To the two outstanding representatives on this committee, the chairperson and the former chairperson, I want to salute you, and I want to thank you for allowing the amendment to go forward, such that it is now a part of the bill.

In closing, I would simply say, as the chairman pointed out, a well-informed public is a well-protected public.

Mr. Chairman, I salute you and I thank you. Mr. Ranking Member, I salute you and thank you as well.

□ 1230

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Does the gentleman have any further speakers?

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am prepared to close after the gentleman from California closes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I support this National Bombing Prevention Act for 2008.

As the gentleman who just spoke from the State of Texas has said, this is a rather inclusive bill. It has a component of operations and training in it; also a component of awareness. And together, they combine to make an excellent bill. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 4749 is important legislation that will ensure that we are positioned to address explosive threats at all levels of government. We know that explosives are all too often terrorists' weapons of choice.

Under HSPD–19, DHS is tasked with researching, identifying, and communicating ''lessons learned and best practices, concerning the use of explosives as a terrorist weapon'' to enhance ''the preparedness of Federal, State, local, territorial, and tribal government personnel to deter, prevent, detect, protect against, and respond to explosive attacks in the United States.''

Passage of H.R. 4749 will put us on a path to enhance the Nation's terrorism response capability and ensure that first responders and first preventers have what they need.

Madam Speaker, I urge a ''yes'' vote on this important homeland security measure.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4749, the National Bombing Prevention Act, introduced by my distinguished colleague from New York, Representative KING This important legislation establishes the Office of Bombing Prevention within the Protective Security Coordination Division of the Office of Infrastructure Protection of the Department.

This legislation is a bipartisan bill, whose lead sponsor is the Ranking Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, Representative KING, and is also cosponsored by Chairman THOMPSON. The function of the Office of Bombing Prevention already exists in the Department, and this bill establishes it in statute. The Office is responsible for coordinating the Government efforts to deter, detect, prevent, protect against, and respond to terrorist explosive attacks in the United States. As we all know, the most likely terrorist threat to our Nation's critical infrastructure and transportation modes is from explosives.

Madam Speaker, we need to ensure that the Office of Bombing Prevention has the protection of being established by the force of law, so the Department can more readily meet the threats to our Nation. This legislation requires the Secretary to develop and periodically update a national strategy to prevent and prepare for terrorist explosive attacks in the United States due 90 days after the date of enactment. The Secretary is further required to report to Congress regarding the national strategy. This strategy is also called for by Homeland Security Presidential Directive-19, Combating Terrorist Use of Explosives in the United States, issued by the President in February of 2007. This legislation also authorizes the Office to support technology transfer efforts as well as research into explosives detection and mitigation.

I did, however, have one reservation with regards to this legislation, regarding canine procurement, which is why I introduced an amendment, which was accepted by the full Committee, to address that issue. Dogs are used to detect illicit and illegal substances every day. They are used to: detect illegal narcotics; find money that is being smuggled out of the country; and locate explosives that may be concealed in cargo, within vehicles, on aircraft, in luggage and on passengers.

There is no doubt that every day, the actions of these dogs and their handlers significantly contribute toward deterring threats and protecting our Nation from terrorists. While the contributions of our canine forces are priceless, they are not without cost. We must place a price on what we are willing to pay for untrained dogs.

The Department of Homeland Security's Inspector General has found that from April 2006 through June 2007, Customs and Border Protection spent $1.46 million on purchasing 322 untrained dogs—that is about $4500 per dog. Most of these dogs are purchased in Europe and brought to America. These are not fully trained animals. They are puppies that will be trained to provide valuable service. I think most people would find $4500 for an untrained dog an exorbitant amount.

However, I cannot deem this amount out of bounds because the Department of Defense pays $3500 for each untrained dog. The Secret Service pays an average of $4500 for each untrained dog. Therefore, the price paid by CBP is within the acceptable range of current practice. However, I think that if we are to be good stewards of the American tax dollar, we must change the current practice. When one considers that domestic breeders offer the same kinds of dogs for $500–$2000, we cannot justify what I can only call a puppy tariff.

My amendment would require the Secretary to explore ways to reduce the amount we pay for each dog we purchase by considering the use of different breeds, procuring dogs from domestic breeders and seeking out dogs from animal shelters or rescue groups. If this Department can successfully implement a new method to obtain capable dogs for our homeland security needs, we could begin a trend that would save the American people millions of dollars each year.

With the inclusion of my amendment, I am deeply satisfied with this legislation. I am proud to support this legislation, which brings our great Nation closer to its goal of securing the homeland, and I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4749, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CIVIL AIR PATROL HOMELAND SECURITY SUPPORT ACT OF 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1333) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to direct the Secretary to enter into an agreement with the Secretary of the Air Force to use Civil Air Patrol personnel and resources to support homeland security missions, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1333

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

SECTION 1. CIVIL AIR PATROL STUDY.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the functions and capabilities of the Civil Air Patrol to support the homeland security missions of State, local, and tribal governments and the Department of Homeland Security. In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall review the process by which the Civil Air Patrol may provide assistance to the Secretary of Homeland Security, other Federal agencies, and States to support homeland security missions by—

(1) providing aerial reconnaissance or communications capabilities for border security;

(2) providing capabilities for collective response to an act of terrorism, natural disaster, or other man-made event, by assisting in damage assessment and situational awareness, conducting search and rescue operations, assisting in evacuations, transporting time-sensitive medical or other materials; or

(3) such other activities as may be determined appropriate by the Comptroller General in the conduct of this review.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Committees on Homeland Security and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report containing the findings of the review conducted under subsection (a). The report shall include—

(1) an assessment of the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of using Civil Air Patrol assets for the purposes described in subsection (a); and

(2) an assessment as to whether the current mechanisms for Federal agencies and States to request support from the Civil Air Patrol are sufficient or whether new agreements between relevant Federal agencies and the Civil Air Patrol are necessary.

(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 90 days after completing the study under this section, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall review and analyze the study and submit to the Committees on Homeland Security and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate a report on such review and analysis, which shall include any recommendations of the Secretary for further action that could affect the organization and administration of the Department of Homeland Security.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this measure, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the Civil Air Patrol has been in existence for decades, providing assistance to governments at the Federal, State and local levels in times of need.

Civil Air Patrol was established in 1941, just days before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. From that moment on, Civil Air Patrol has stood ready to supplement America's military operations. And over the years, it has shown itself to be a faithful partner to the Department of Defense. Therefore, it stands to reason that Civil Air Patrol could also partner with the Department of Homeland Security.

That is the thinking behind H.R. 1333 introduced by Representative CHARLIE DENT, a member of the Committee on Homeland Security. H.R. 1333 directs the Government Accountability Office to examine the capabilities of the Civil Air Patrol to support DHS's activities across the country.

The bill was unanimously adopted by the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response on April 30. Then on May 20, the full committee approved H.R. 1333 unanimously.

Civil Air Patrol is a great example of how patriotic Americans can contribute to the security of this Nation and their communities. As someone who served as a volunteer firefighter, I appreciate that kind of dedication. There is no doubt in my mind that the Civil Air Patrol is a United States treasure. In fact, during any given year, the Civil Air Patrol is responsible for nearly 95 percent of Air Force-directed search and rescue missions.

This Government Accountability Office study, called for in this bill, will improve Congress' and the administration's understanding of how Civil Air Patrol can provide homeland security assistance. The GAO study will also help Congress assess whether the operational structure in place for coordination between the Civil Air Patrol and its government and non-profit partners is sufficient and optimal for the security of our Nation.

Additionally, the bill calls for GAO to report on the cost-effectiveness of using Civil Air Patrol assets for homeland security missions and help Congress understand whether the current mechanism for Federal agencies and States to request Civil Air Patrol support are adequate.

Finally, the bill directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to review and analyze GAO's study and report to Congress as to which GAO recommendations warrant further action.

I commend my colleague, Mr. DENT, and his partner in this endeavor, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response, Mr. CUELLAR, for developing this thoughtful bill. I support H.R. 1333 and its underlying goals and urge passage.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I do rise today to support H.R. 1333, the Civil Air Patrol Homeland Security Act of 2007. And this legislation, which I introduced on March 6, 2007, has the bipartisan support of 56 Members of Congress.

I would first like to thank our good friend and colleague, Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON of Mississippi, as well as Ranking Member PETE KING of the Homeland Security Committee, as well as Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for their cooperation and support in bringing this legislation to the floor today.

I also want to especially thank the subcommittee chairman, HENRY CUELLAR, who chairs the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response on which I serve as the ranking member for his support of this legislation throughout this process and throughout this 110th Congress. I want to thank Chairman CUELLAR especially.

H.R. 1333, as amended, would require the Government Accountability Office, the GAO, to conduct an expansive review to determine how the Civil Air Patrol may be used to support the homeland security missions of State, local and tribal governments, and the Department of Homeland Security.

Specifically, the GAO will review how the Civil Air Patrol may provide aerial reconnaissance or communications capabilities for border security; assist in damage assessments and situational awareness; search and rescue operations, evacuations and the transport of time-sensitive medical or other materials; or perform any other activities as determined by the GAO.

This review will provide greater information regarding the cost-effectiveness of using Civil Air Patrol assets for homeland security purposes at all levels of government. It will also help us understand whether the current process for States and the Federal Government to request Civil Air Patrol assistance is overly bureaucratic, limiting the effectiveness of this important resource in times of crisis.

Aviation assets have traditionally played an important role in border security, the interdiction of contraband, search and rescue operations, evacuations, and after-action analyses that must be performed in the wake of a catastrophic event.

A Civil Air Patrol force of 57,000 volunteers and 500 planes across the country stands ready to assist in those important missions.

The Civil Air Patrol has a long history of service to this Nation. The organization was founded at the outbreak of the Second World War, during which it served as a vital watchdog along the coastlines of America, protecting us from the threat of German U-boats that patrolled our shores. They even engaged U-boats during that war as well, sinking a few.

Since then, the Civil Air Patrol has regularly assisted States in search and rescue operations and emergency response. The Civil Air Patrol indicates that it would welcome the opportunity to play an expanded role in homeland security operations, as that role would be defined by the Comptroller General, the Department of Homeland Security, and the United States Congress.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and help ensure that we are effectively utilizing all available resources for responses to catastrophic events.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response.

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I also want to thank Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON who has done a great job as the chairman. He has allowed what I call the free market of ideas to work

well. That is if a Member comes up with an idea, we will go through the process and after that if it is a good idea and will protect our homeland, he has given us an opportunity to come up with and move those ideas; so thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the ideas is of course H.R. 1333 which is the one that Ranking Member CHARLIE DENT has brought forward. It is an idea that would allow us to supplement the security of our country. So I certainly want to thank Mr. DENT for the idea and of course for moving this great idea forward.

I support this particular bill because it allows the GAO to conduct a study to determine how the Civil Air Patrol can help support our homeland security missions. The Civil Air Patrol has long served our Nation. The Civil Air Patrol began at the onset of World War II, patrolling the coastlines of America, protecting the shores of our great Nation from foreign threats.

Since that time, the Civil Air Patrol has regularly assisted States, and that includes also my State of Texas, with search and rescue operations and emergency response. The Civil Air Patrol welcomes this opportunity to play an expanded role in homeland security operations as that role will be defined by the Comptroller General, the Department of Homeland Security, and of course by the United States Congress.

This study will give the Secretary of Homeland Security the ability to consider the use of the Civil Air Patrol to provide aerial assistance to the Department of Homeland Security agencies that are responsible for protecting America against illegal entry and trafficking of people and contraband.

Being from Laredo, Texas, and representing Webb, Starr, Zapata and Hidalgo counties on the border, I do understand why we need this assistance. And I think the way it has been crafted by Mr. DENT, this will allow Homeland Security to use these extra assets on the border to give us the extra protection that we need to make sure that we protect ourselves. So I certainly feel that the Civil Air Patrol can not only provide protection on the border, but also respond to acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other man-made events by assisting in damage assessment, search and rescue operations, and evacuations.

I thank my colleague, CHARLIE DENT, and my chairman, Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON. I know MICHAEL MCCAUL will also speak about how this will help in Texas, and other efforts. Again, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1333.

Mr. DENT. Madam Speaker, I would just like to confirm with the majority whether they have any additional speakers at this time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I have no additional speakers. If the gentleman from Pennsylvania has no speakers, I am prepared to close.

Mr. DENT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Chairman THOMPSON and Chairman OBERSTAR and Chairman CUELLAR, for their bipartisan support and leadership on this important issue in helping us move this legislation forward.

I also want to point out that I had a few interesting experiences on the border with Chairman CUELLAR. I visited Laredo, Texas, on two separate occasions with him, and I looked at what our Border Patrol was up to. I noticed there was a lack of aviation assets. In fact, Chairman CUELLAR and I had a rather exciting visit on a helicopter in Laredo, Texas, and we got a good look at the border areas, and witnessed the lack of aviation assets on that border.

□ 1245

And so that certainly helped inspire this legislation.

Also, I'd like to point out too that there are a lot of good ideas that come from places other than Washington, D.C. When I was back in my district some time ago I remember a constituent of mine named David Miller, who is an octogenarian; he served during the Second World War, a pilot. He said to me, he talked about the use of the Civil Air Patrol during the Second World War and suggested, why don't you get them more engaged for various homeland security initiatives, particularly border security? I thought it sounded like a reasonable idea, and I looked into it and, of course, that's why we're here today dealing with legislation to further examine this very important issue. I thank David Miller for his foresight, just being a good citizen and making recommendations to his elected representative.

Also I would like to point out another former member, Lester Wolf of New York, had also been a strong advocate of greater utilization of the Civil Air Patrol. He served in, I think, the Long Island area of New York and was quite strong on this need for this type of legislation.

As well as a man named Bob Minert who is the executive director of the Pennsylvania wing of the Civil Air Patrol. Again, I want to thank all of them for their interest and leadership and helping get us to where we are today.

I would just like to say that the GAO study that this legislation requires will help Congress assess the current capabilities of the Civil Air Patrol to assist the Federal Government and our State and local partners in conducting homeland security missions. The review will help us determine whether the current mechanisms to utilize the Civil Air Patrol as a force multiplier in various missions, including search and rescue and border security, are sufficient to meet today's needs.

As we saw after September 11 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, in a catastrophic event, this country must be able to dramatically increase the number of response assets, while ensuring that Federal, State and local resources are well coordinated. By examining how various resources like the Civil Air Patrol may contribute to a mission prior to an event, we will help strengthen our Nation's security and resiliency.

I would like to thank everybody involved with this legislation, all my colleagues, and the 56 co-sponsors of this legislation. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and help to strengthen the performance of Homeland Security missions in the Department of Homeland Security.

Madam Speaker, at this time I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 1333. I strongly believe that the GAO report required under H.R. 1333 will provide us with the information needed to reach the right decision on the question of whether a formal relationship between DHS and CAP will serve our Nation's homeland security interests.

Certainly, over the past 60 years, Civil Air Patrol has shown itself to be a faithful partner to the Department of Defense. It is conceivable that the Civil Air Patrol could contribute to border security, search and rescue and responsive activities at DHS.

Additionally, it would be interesting to know whether the Civil Air Patrol can provide emergency transport for sensitive medical materials. I would also be interested to know whether the Civil Air Patrol area reconnaissance and communications capability can enhance our border security and DHS's ability to have situational awareness of natural disasters and other man-made events. The GAO study called for in this bill will answer these core capability questions.

For this reason, I support H.R. 1333, and urge its passage.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1333, Civil Air Patrol Homeland Security Support Act of 2007, introduced by my distinguished colleague from Pennsylvania, Representative DENT. This important legislation is a first step for the Committee on Homeland Security to understand how the Civil Air Patrol can provide necessary Homeland Security assistance.

The Civil Air Patrol is a prime example of how Americans can get involved to support our Nation's preparedness and response to emergencies as well as our Nation's great history of civil aviation and aerospace education. The Civil Air Patrol is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and also serves as the U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, when given an Air Force assignment for a Federal support mission. The Civil Air Patrol flies missions in one of two ways: they are either assigned an Air Force mission, wherein they fly on behalf of the Federal Government as the Air Force Auxiliary, or they fly in their non-profit status based on requests from State and local governments or other organizations, many of which have MOU's with the Civil Air Patrol that govern their partnerships. As such, the Civil Air Patrol

performs a vital service for this Nation, one which must be further examines and utilized.

Over the course of any given year, the Civil Air Patrol is responsible for conducting over 90 percent of the Nation's inland search and rescue operations on behalf of the Air Force. In fiscal year 2007 alone, the Civil Air Patrol helped save 103 lives. Beyond that capacity to execute search and rescue missions, the. Civil Air Patrol can also provide emergency transport for sensitive medical materials and conducts low-altitude reconnaissance surveys for the Government. Even with the Civil Air Patrol is not in the air but working on the ground, their volunteers have pitched in to assist with disaster response.

This important legislation will require that the GAG examine how the Civil Air Patrol's proficiency in aerial reconnaissance and communications can enhance our border security. It furthermore will assess the Civil Air Patrol's experience in conducting damage assessment and enhancing situational awareness and how that might be utilized to improve our Nation's collective response to an act of terrorism, natural disaster, or other man-made event. The GAG report produced by this legislation will be utilized to paint a clear picture of the cost-effectiveness of using Civil Air Patrol assets for homeland security missions and help this committee to understand whether the current mechanisms for Federal agencies and States to request CAP support are adequate.

In this age of a global war on terror, it is imperative that we utilize all the assets available to us to secure our homeland. The Civil Air Patrol has been an invaluable resource for this Nation and embodies the volunteer service that makes our Nation great. I commend the Civil Air Patrol for their commitment to service and protecting this country, and I support this legislation that seeks to further examine how we might use them for their homeland security capacity.

I wholeheartedly support this legislation and strongly urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing so.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1333, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the use of Civil Air Patrol personnel and resources to support homeland security missions, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR FORENSICS AND ATTRIBUTION ACT

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2631) to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2631

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 ''Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The threat of a nuclear terrorist attack on American interests, both domestic and abroad, is one of the most serious threats to the national security of the United States. In the wake of an attack, attribution of responsibility would be of utmost importance. Because of the destructive power of the weapon, there could be little forensic evidence except the radioactive material in the bomb itself.

(2) Through advanced nuclear forensics, using both existing techniques and those under development, it may be possible to identify the source and pathway of a weapon or material after it is interdicted or detonated. Though identifying intercepted smuggled material is now possible in some cases, pre-detonation forensics is a relatively undeveloped field. The post-detonation nuclear forensics field is also immature, and the challenges are compounded by the pressures and time constraints of performing forensics after a nuclear or radiological attack.

(3) A robust and well-known capability to identify the source of nuclear or radiological material intended for or used in an act of terror could also deter prospective proliferators. Furthermore, the threat of effective attribution could compel improved security at material storage facilities, preventing the unwitting transfer of nuclear or radiological materials.

(4)(A) In order to identify special nuclear material and other radioactive materials confidently, it is necessary to have a robust capability to acquire samples in a timely manner, analyze and characterize samples, and compare samples against known signatures of nuclear and radiological material.

(B) Many of the radioisotopes produced in the detonation of a nuclear device have short half-lives, so the timely acquisition of samples is of the utmost importance. Over the past several decades, the ability of the United States to gather atmospheric samples—often the preferred method of sample acquisition has diminished. This ability must be restored and modern techniques that could complement or replace existing techniques should be pursued.

(C) The discipline of pre-detonation forensics is a relatively undeveloped field. The radiation associated with a nuclear or radiological device may affect traditional forensics techniques in unknown ways. In a post-detonation scenario, radiochemistry may provide the most useful tools for analysis and characterization of samples. The number of radiochemistry programs and radiochemists in United States National Laboratories and universities has dramatically declined over the past several decades. The narrowing pipeline of qualified people into this critical field is a serious impediment to maintaining a robust and credible nuclear forensics program.

(5) Once samples have been acquired and characterized, it is necessary to compare the results against samples of known material from reactors, weapons, and enrichment facilities, and from medical, academic, commercial, and other facilities containing such materials, throughout the world. Some of these samples are available to the International Atomic Energy Agency through safeguards agreements, and some countries maintain internal sample databases. Access to samples in many countries is limited by national security concerns.

(6) In order to create a sufficient deterrent, it is necessary to have the capability to positively identify the source of nuclear or radiological material, and potential traffickers in nuclear or radiological material must be aware of that capability. International cooperation may be essential to catalogue all existing sources of nuclear or radiological material.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS FOR FORENSICS CO-OPERATION.

It is the sense of the Congress that the President should—

(1) pursue bilateral and multilateral international agreements to establish, or seek to establish under the auspices of existing bilateral or multilateral agreements, an international framework for determining the source of any confiscated nuclear or radiological material or weapon, as well as the source of any detonated weapon and the nuclear or radiological material used in such a weapon;

(2) develop protocols for the data exchange and dissemination of sensitive information relating to nuclear or radiological materials and samples of controlled nuclear or radiological materials, to the extent required by the agreements entered into under paragraph (1); and

(3) develop expedited protocols for the data exchange and dissemination of sensitive information needed to publicly identify the source of a nuclear detonation.

SEC. 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DOMESTIC NUCLEAR DETECTION OFFICE.

(a) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—Section 1902 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as redesignated by Public Law 110–53; 6 U.S.C. 592) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (9), by striking ''and'' after the semicolon;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (14); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

''(10) develop and implement, with the approval of the Secretary and in coordination with the heads of appropriate departments and agencies, methods and capabilities to support the attribution of nuclear or radiological material to its source when such material is intercepted by the United States, foreign governments, or international bodies or is dispersed in the course of a terrorist attack or other nuclear or radiological explosion;

''(11) establish, within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center to provide centralized stewardship, planning, assessment, gap analysis, exercises, improvement, and integration for all Federal nuclear forensics activities to ensure an enduring national technical nuclear forensics capability to strengthen the collective response of the United States to nuclear terrorism or other nuclear attacks;

''(12) establish a National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program which—

''(A) is devoted to developing and maintaining a vibrant and enduring academic pathway from undergraduate to post-doctorate study in nuclear and geochemical science specialties directly relevant to technical nuclear forensics, including radiochemistry, geochemistry, nuclear physics, nuclear engineering, materials science, and analytical chemistry; and

''(B) shall—

''(i) make available for undergraduate study student scholarships, with a duration of up to four years per student, which shall include, whenever possible, at least one summer internship at a national laboratory or appropriate Federal agency in the field of technical nuclear forensics during the course of the student's undergraduate career;

''(ii) make available for graduate study student fellowships, with a duration of up to five years per student, which—

''(I) shall include, whenever possible, at least two summer internships at a national laboratory

or appropriate Federal agency in the field of technical nuclear forensics during the course of the student's graduate career; and

''(II) shall require each recipient to commit to serve for two years in a post-doctoral position in a technical nuclear forensics-related specialty at a national laboratory or appropriate Federal agency after graduation;

''(iii) make available to faculty awards, with a duration of three to five years each, to ensure faculty and their graduate students a sustained funding stream; and

''(iv) place a particular emphasis on reinvigorating technical nuclear forensics programs, while encouraging the participation of undergraduate students, graduate students, and university faculty from historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities;

''(13) provide an annual report to Congress on the activities carried out under paragraphs (10), (11), and (12); and''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term 'historically Black college or university' has the meaning given the term 'part B institution' in section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2)).

''(2) HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term 'Hispanic-serving institution' has the meaning given that term in section 502 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1101a).

''(3) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term 'Tribal College or University' has the meaning given that term in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)).''.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated the sum of $30,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011 to carry out paragraphs (10) through (13) of section 1902(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. 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 Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, was introduced last year by the gentleman from California, Congressman SCHIFF. It was marked up and adopted unanimously by the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology in October 2007. The full committee approved it unanimously on May 20 of this year.

I would like to congratulate Congressman SCHIFF and thank Subcommittee Chairman LANGEVIN and Ranking Member MCCAUL for their work in getting the bill to the floor today.

Like the other homeland security measures we are considering today, I strongly believe that H.R. 2631 ties in with the DHS authorization legislation that the House approved last spring, H.R. 1684, and is still pending before the Senate.

We know that our enemies, both terrorists and rogue nations, are interested in developing and using nuclear and radiological weapons. In the case of an attempted or, heaven forbid, a successful nuclear or radiological attack, rapid attribution is critical. Our government must have the capability to quickly determine the source of nuclear material so that the key decision-makers have information needed to respond.

Certainly, if the terrorists know that we have a nuclear forensic capability that can pinpoint their role in creating a bomb, they're bound to have second thoughts. The deterrent effect of a robust nuclear forensic capability is enormous.

Unfortunately, today the U.S. must rely on expertise and technology developed during the Cold War to address the emerging threats of a nuclear ''dirty'' bomb. The nuclear weapons work force is aging, just as its mission has shifted from traditional deterrence policy to the more complicated challenge of containing the threats posed by terrorists and rogue nations. Our Nation's capability in the scientific fields of radiochemistry and geochemistry must be fostered to meet this new threat. This is the purpose of this bill.

H.R. 2631 expresses the sense of Congress that the President should pursue international agreements and develop protocols to share sensitive information needed to identify the source of a nuclear detonation.

It also tasks the Secretary of Homeland Security with the mission of developing methods to attribute nuclear and radiological material, both within the Department's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, and in partnership with other Federal agencies.

The legislation, as amended in committee, emphasizes that development of a robust nuclear forensics capability depends chiefly on an expertly trained work force in this area, and provides support for educational programs relevant to nuclear forensics.

H.R. 2631 also authorizes the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center, which will be responsible for providing centralized planning, assessment and integration of all Federal nuclear forensic activities; requires the Secretary to report annually to Congress on the Federal Government's efforts to enhance its nuclear forensic capability, including the status of work force development programs, and authorizes $30 million per year for the next 3 fiscal years for this effort.

H.R. 2631 continues this committee's practices of authorizing programs and offices within DHS that are of value to the agency's mission, so as to assure that the work can continue and progress can be achieved in the years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, May 27, 2008.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,

Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology in H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, H.R. 2631 was introduced by Congressman Adam B. Schiff on June 7, 2007, and the bill was subsequently marked up by the Committee on Homeland Security on May 20, 2008.

H.R. 2631 implicates the Committee on Science and Technology's jurisdiction under rule X(1)(o) of the House Rules. The Committee on Science and Technology acknowledges the importance of H.R. 2631 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over this bill, I agree not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces, or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology, and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the legislative report for this bill and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Committee on Science and Technology also expects that you will support our request to be conferees during any House-Senate conference on H.R. 2631 or similar legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,

Washington, DC, June 11, 2008.

Hon. HOWARD L. BERMAN,

Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 2631 contains provisions that fall under the jurisdictional interests of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I appreciate your agreement to forgo any further consideration or action on this legislation, and that your decision to do so does not affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Further, I recognize that your Committee reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees on the bill for the portions of the bill that are within your jurisdiction, and I agree to support such a request.

I will ensure that this exchange of letters in included in the Committee's report on H.R. 2631 and in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during floor consideration of H.R. 2631. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 11, 2008.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security, Ford House Office Building, Washington, DC.

Dear Mr. Chairman: I am writing to you regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff. This legislation was initially referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and, in addition, to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In the interest of permitting your Committee to proceed expeditiously to floor consideration of this important legislation, I am willing to waive further consideration of H.R. 2631. I do so with the understanding that by waiving consideration of the bill, the Committee on Foreign Affairs does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the resolution which fall within its Rule X jurisdiction.

Further, I request your support for the appointment of Foreign Affairs Committee conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation. I also ask that a copy of this letter and your response be placed in the committee report for H.R. 2631 and in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill.

I look forward to working with you as we move this important measure through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

HOWARD L. BERMAN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, May 28, 2008.

Hon. BART GORDON,
Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology, Rayburn Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this important legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 2631 contains amendments to provisions of law related to matters that fall under the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology. I appreciate your agreement to not seek a sequential referral of this legislation and acknowledge that your decision to forgo a sequential referral on this bill does not waive, alter, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology.

Further, I recognize that your committee reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees on the bill for the portions of the bill that are within your jurisdiction, and I agree to support such a request.

I will ensure that this exchange of letters is included is the Committee's report on H.R. 2631 and in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 2631. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I'm proud today to cosponsor and to support this bill and extend my gratitude for the bipartisan cooperation that went into drafting this important legislation—Congressman SCHIFF, Chairman THOMPSON, Chairman LANGEVIN.

The detonation of a nuclear device in an urban area of this country would be catastrophic to say the least. And with nuclear proliferation worldwide with such apparatuses as the A.Q. Kahn network reaching the Islamic jihad world, countries like Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, the threat of a nuclear explosion and the threat of nuclear devices coming into this country is very real. This bill will help prevent that.

Reducing the risk of nuclear or radiological terrorism requires a layered system of defenses that involves deterring, detecting, disrupting and recovering from terrorist attacks.

We've spent a great deal of time in this Congress discussing the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic and Nuclear Detection Office, or DNDO, to deploy radiation portal monitors at our Nation's ports of entry. These monitors, staffed by Customs and Border Protection officers, are the Nation's first line of defense against illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological material.

I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the DNDO on their achievements in this area. But even with the best possible detection systems, the possibility remains that terrorists could beat the system and sneak something past one of our detectors and through a non-official port of entry. That is why defense against terrorism, especially nuclear terrorism, requires a multi-layered approach.

This bill will improve a critical layer in our Nation's system defenses against the risk of nuclear and radiological terrorism by codifying the role of the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center, which already exists within the DNDO. By enhancing our nuclear forensic capabilities, we will be able to more easily identify the source of nuclear materials. And while getting the whole picture also requires good intelligence and law-enforcement style investigations, a credible attribution program could even serve as a deterrent against nuclear terrorism.

A main concern I have had is the decreasing number of qualified people into the fields associated with nuclear forensics. In recent years, the number of young people entering scientific fields has declined. The nuclear fields, in particular, are suffering, especially in fields relevant to nuclear forensics, which may have no commercial counterpart. I'm pleased that this legislation includes language designed to strengthen the pipeline of talented new scientists into this important field, especially from minority-serving institutions, so as to take full advantage of all the talent present in our universities.

This bill instructs the Department to establish a National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program which is devoted to developing and maintaining a vibrant and enduring pipeline of technical professionals. This program will grant scholarships and fellowships from the undergraduate through the postdoctorate level of study in nuclear and geochemical science specialties, directly relevant to technical nuclear forensic.

This legislation is the first step in the right direction of reinvigorating the work force in an area critical to continued defense against nuclear and radiological terrorism.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and its goals to improve the state of nuclear forensics in this country.

With that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 4 minutes to the chairman of the subcommittee handling the legislation, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1300

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, H.R. 2631, introduced by my friend and colleague, Congressman ADAM SCHIFF. Through my work on both the Homeland Security Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I have become convinced that the nuclear terrorist threat is real requiring the full and urgent attention of our government.

Now, last weekend, we received a stark reminder of just how real this threat is. According to media reports, A.Q. Khan's network provided nations, possibly Iran and North Korea, with blueprints for a sophisticated nuclear device small enough to fit on a ballistic missile.

Now, I take this threat very seriously, and as chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology, I focus much of my attention on addressing our nuclear vulnerability. And I have always said that the core of our efforts must focus on a three-prong strategy: an approach of prevention, detection, and response.

Now, by strengthening our detection capabilities, we've certainly made it more difficult for those who wish us harm to smuggle in nuclear weapons or weapons of nuclear material across our border. In fact, we are currently screening 100 percent of all incoming cargo on the southern border, 98 percent on the Nation's seaports, and 91 percent on the northern border. And Director Vayl Oxford of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office assures me we will be screening 100 percent along our northern border by next year.

Now, I firmly believe that the surest way to prevent a nuclear terrorist attack from occurring is to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear weapons

or weapons-grade nuclear material in the first place, but all those who have these materials should be also put on notice that all nuclear material contains a unique signature that could be traced back to them.

Now, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is a critical mechanism for enhancing this capability. Nuclear forensics allows experts to study the mix of isotopes and other features of nuclear material that give it a particular signature, or fingerprint. Once a nuclear signature has been promptly identified, we can oftentimes trace the material back to a particular source. Now, this is perhaps one of the best proactive measures we can take to deter terrorists from acquiring and detonating a nuclear weapon. It's also a wake-up call for all nations that already have nuclear weapons or weapons-grade nuclear material to better secure it.

If nations around the world know they can be identified as the source of material used in a nuclear attack, they may think twice about proliferating knowing that they would be the target of any retaliatory efforts.

In short, Madam Speaker, when people think of tracing where a nuclear attack would come from, they think of the missile being launched from a particular location and then detonated at a target, and they would obviously know and would be able to trace that missile back to where it was originally launched from. And if anybody were to smuggle a nuclear device into the country and detonate it, they would get off scot-free. Well, nuclear forensics clearly shows that is not the case.

Any time that a nuclear weapon would be detonated or weapons-grade nuclear material would be used, it does come with a return address, and we would be able to trace it back.

I'm proud to be a cosponsor of this measure, and I'm also pleased that we're taking yet another step to protect Americans against a nuclear threat.

Again, I would like to thank Congressman SCHIFF for his leadership on this issue. I would like to thank my Ranking Member Mr. MCCAUL on the subcommittee for helping to bring this to the floor. And most especially I want to thank the chairman of the full Committee on Homeland Security, Chairman THOMPSON, for his leadership on securing the Nation against potential nuclear threats and for all of his great leadership on homeland security issues and for bringing this issue to the floor today.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I do have one more speaker, the author of the bill.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers and am prepared to close.

I reserve my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I would like to recognize the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for 4 minutes, the author of this legislation and a persistent pursuer making sure that we get it to the floor.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the chairman of the full committee for his leadership on this issue and for his indulgence of my perseverance. I'm very grateful that the bill moved so quickly and for his support of it. I also want to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and Technology, JIM LANGEVIN, for his leadership, and also thank the Ranking Member Mr. MCCAUL. I really appreciate all of your help. It's been a bipartisan effort from the very beginning, and that's the way it should be.

Through this legislation, we're taking an important step to prevent nuclear terrorism, and I appreciate, again, all of the work of the committee and staff.

Nuclear terrorism is the preeminent threat of our time. Many countries around the world now have access to technology that was once the realm of only a few. Just last week it was reported that an advanced nuclear weapon design was found on a computer connected to one nuclear smuggling ring, and that was the one mentioned by my colleague, Mr. LANGEVIN. Illicit nuclear material has been intercepted in transit many times since the Cold War, and the material we catch is probably just a small fraction of the total amount trafficked.

The President and Congress have recognized that a nuclear attack on the United States is the most important national security threat facing our country. In the ongoing effort to strengthen our border, this Congress has made it more difficult to smuggle a nuclear weapon into the United States. But with thousands of miles of borders to secure against weapons just a few feet in size, we cannot simply play defense at the border. We must also prevent the weapons and materials that lie in storage around the world from falling into the wrong hands.

During the Cold War, we deterred the Soviet Union with the threat of nuclear retaliation. Unfortunately, the decentralized flexible terror networks that we face today are not as easily deterred. Osama bin Laden has termed the acquisition of mass destruction a religious duty. And there is no question that using such a weapon against America is consistent with the group's contempt for human life.

The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is designed to help shut down trade in nuclear material by deterring those parts of the trafficking network susceptible to deterrence. If we identify the source of nuclear material, then when we intercept it in transit, we can hold responsible those who created it and shared it with terrorists or rogue nations. In the aftermath of an attack, God forbid, this capability would also help determine the identity of those responsible. Nations, companies, and individuals could be dissuaded from proliferating knowing that their malfeasance could be traced back to them.

The first part of this bill expands our ability to determine the source of nuclear material by strengthening our nuclear forensics capability. Nuclear forensics is the study of the chemistry and physical properties of nuclear material that give it a particular signature. Scientists and engineers skilled in the field can also use information from the packaging and accompanying materials to pinpoint a source.

But acquiring, analyzing, characterizing, and attributing samples is a complicated process. Though we have the capability to perform each step, our expertise is split between the Departments of Energy, Defense, Homeland Security, and State.

This bill authorizes a national technical nuclear forensics center in the Department of Homeland Security. The center will coordinate the various agencies and ensure that a sufficient combined response is present whenever nuclear material is intercepted or used in a weapon. It will also advance the science of nuclear forensics bringing in new radiochemists and physicists into a rapidly aging workforce and funding research on new methods to identify materials from around the world.

But this bill also has another purpose. As with fingerprints or DNA, the strength of nuclear forensics depends on the strength of our database. Nuclear material can come from many nations, some friendly and some unfriendly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentleman 2 additional minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman. That will be the last of my perseverance, Mr. Chairman.

The strength of nuclear forensics depends on the strength of our database. That material can come from many nations, some friendly, some unfriendly, and the individual recipes are closely-held secrets. However, little of the information needed for nuclear forensics is of direct use to our adversaries, and in the case of our allies, the risk of not sharing the data and failing to discover a security breach is much greater than sharing the information.

Thus, the bill asked the President to negotiate agreements with other nations to share information on the make-up of their nuclear materials. We can come to bilateral agreements with our allies or sign multi-lateral treaties through the IAEA. We can even begin the database with just civilian reactor materials where information security is less of an issue. But we must get started now.

The National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center should play a key role in the negotiations since in the end, the data we obtain must be the data that the experts need. Nuclear terrorism is a threat of paramount danger

and uncertain probability. As communications and transportation bring us ever closer to our friends, they bring our enemies closer as well. This modest but effective bill will help keep us safe as we navigate the years ahead.

Again, I want to thank Chairman THOMPSON for his leadership and the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee for their assistance and sponsorship, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close at this point and wonder if the gentleman from California is also.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close.

The threat of nuclear terrorism is real as we've heard. The intent, motivation from al Qaeda and the radical Islamic world is very real. They want to acquire this capability, and we know that with the proliferation of this technology with nuclear capability, through the A.Q. Khan network to many other countries, we know that this threat is literally on the doorstep. I believe this bill will go a long ways to protecting Americans which, after all, is our first and foremost obligation as Members of Congress to protect the American people as the Constitution requires.

And that is why I'm so proud that this was presented in a bipartisan fashion. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue. This is an American issue. It is about protecting the lives of the American people. And I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act. I would like to pay tribute to Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, Subcommittee Chairman LANGEVIN, and Ranking Member MCCAUL for the thoughtful approach taken on this critical Homeland Security concern.

The risk, vulnerability, and consequences of a nuclear bomb are significantly different than what we think of as a dirty bomb. While a nuclear bomb is most assuredly a weapon of mass destruction, a dirty bomb is at best a weapon of mass disruption. A dirty bomb may include some radioactive material, but if detonated, few people, if any, would die shortly after exposure.

In contrast, tens of thousands of people could potentially die from an explosion of a nuclear bomb.

We need a new Manhattan Project, one where we build a nuclear forensics capability and workforce that can address the myriad of nuclear threats that we face today. H.R. 2631 does just that. That is why, Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this important legislation.

Madam Speaker, as you heard, Ranking Member KING is attending the services of Tim Russert. I would like to join my ranking member and other Members of Congress in expressing our sympathies to the family of Tim Russert.

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 Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2631, as amended.

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

The title was amended so as to read: ''A bill to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1315

CONDEMNING POSTELECTION VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1230) condemning postelection violence in Zimbabwe and calling for a peaceful resolution to the current political crisis, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1230

Whereas the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF), led by President Robert Mugabe, has controlled Zimbabwe's executive and legislative branches for 28 years;

Whereas over the past 8 years, ZANU–PF has suppressed political dissidents and won elections and referendums through the use of vote rigging, localized violence, harassment, and intimidation;

Whereas the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe has been worsening since 2000, culminating in the current electoral crisis;

Whereas Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in Zimbabwe on March 29, 2008;

Whereas the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) released the results for the 2008 presidential election 5 weeks after the contest took place, announcing President Mugabe won 43.2 percent of the vote, while Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), won 47.8 percent of the vote;

Whereas as the ZEC announced neither candidate won over 50 percent of the vote, the 2 candidates have to compete in a runoff election;

Whereas the long delay in announcing the presidential election results undermined the credibility of the ZEC;

Whereas the Zimbabwean people have indicated through the ballot box that they want a change in leadership;

Whereas in the wake of the elections, President Mugabe has unleashed security forces and militia against opposition supporters and members of civil society;

Whereas over 2,900 people have been tortured and beaten, and at least 36 have been confirmed dead as a result of an ongoing campaign of state-sponsored political violence;

Whereas government security forces raided the MDC party headquarters, arresting 300 people, some of them children;

Whereas government security forces have detained Morgan Tsvangirai on multiple occasions as he has tried to campaign for the June 27, 2008, runoff election, and have arrested MDC Secretary General Tendai Biti;

Whereas the offices of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network have been raided and some of its employees detained;

Whereas security forces have attacked humanitarian organizations and civil society groups;

Whereas the Government of Zimbabwe has suspended the activities of humanitarian aid organizations in its country, putting hundreds of thousands of children and other vulnerable members of the population at risk of hunger and malnutrition;

Whereas diplomats, including the United States ambassador to Zimbabwe, have been detained by government security forces in direct contravention of the protections offered diplomats in the Vienna Convention;

Whereas South African President Thabo Mbeki has stated that the political violence in Zimbabwe is a cause for ''serious concern'';

Whereas the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) have been continually engaged in efforts to bring about an end to the political crisis in Zimbabwe;

Whereas the AU and SADC dispatched delegations to Harare, but have not yet successfully compelled the Government of Zimbabwe to restore the rule of law;

Whereas Zimbabwe's gross domestic product declined about 43 percent between 2000 and 2007 and the unemployment rate is 80 percent;

Whereas Zimbabwe's inflation rate, at almost 165,000 percent, is the highest in the world and has contributed significantly to the country's economic collapse;

Whereas worsening economic conditions and commodity shortages have caused at least 3,000,000 people to flee the country;

Whereas after the March 29, 2008, elections the opposition offered to enter into a dialogue to bring about an end to the ensuing political crisis;

Whereas all parties must engage constructively towards peace and reconciliation for the sake of the Zimbabwean people; and

Whereas the people of Zimbabwe deserve the assistance of the international community in the restoration of fundamental human rights, democratic freedom, and the rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls on all security forces, informal militias, and individuals to immediately cease attacks on and abuse of civilians;

(2) strongly condemns the orchestrated campaign of violence, torture, and harassment conducted by the ruling party and its supporters and sympathizers in the police and military against members of the opposition, opposition parties, and all other civilians;

(3) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to create an environment conducive to a peaceful transition of power;

(4) encourages the political parties to commit to forming a government that reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people and promotes national unity, the restoration of the

rule of law, and genuine democratic governance;

(5) advocates for a mechanism such as a truth and reconciliation commission through which to ensure accountability for all groups and individuals who are found to have orchestrated or committed human rights violations in the context of the elections;

(6) urges the United Nations, with the cooperation and support of the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) to dispatch a special envoy to Zimbabwe without delay, with a mandate to monitor the runoff elections and the human rights situation, and to support efforts to find a peaceful resolution to the political crisis;

(7) urges the international community, under the leadership of the United Nations, AU, SADC, and the SADC Parliamentary Forum, to deploy teams of credible persons to serve as monitors to ensure that the outcome of the presidential runoff elections reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people;

(8) commends the people of Zimbabwe for their continued courage in the face of systematic persecution, intimidation, and abuse, and commits to providing continued humanitarian assistance until the economic crisis is resolved;

(9) commends the actions being taken by activists, civil society organizations, and churches in support of democracy and respect for basic human rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe, and encourages these entities to maintain their activities; and

(10) stands in solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe.

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. 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 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. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, let me begin by expressing my appreciation to the unanimous support of the Congressional Black Caucus, all 21 other Members, who have joined as original cosponsors to this resolution condemning post-election violence in Zimbabwe and calling for a peaceful resolution to the current political crisis.

Madam Speaker, assertive U.S. diplomatic engagement has contributed to conflict resolution in many African countries, especially over the past decade. Zimbabwe is one of the few exceptions, unfortunately. While many African countries moved to embrace democracy and rule of law, the dictatorship in Zimbabwe has taken the once promising country to a state of anarchy and haplessness.

President Robert Mugabe has been in power in the country since it got its independence in 1980, along with Joshua Nkomo, one of the great freedom fighters. The two joined in building Zimbabwe in its early days. Great strides were made, especially in education, and Zimbabwe became a leader in that area throughout Africa.

The country began to progress during those early days; however, when multiparty elections were introduced, the Mugabe regime began to lose its prominence. The Movement for Democratic Change, MDC, became an alternative to ZANU–PF.

In reaction to the winds of democracy, the Mugabe regime cracked down on the opposition party and thwarted democracy. The people of Zimbabwe have suffered since that time under the brutal dictatorship of the Mugabe regime.

The recent elections in Zimbabwe in March were a clear signal by the people of Zimbabwe that they wanted real change. Yet, Mr. Mugabe once again is in the process of crushing the democratic aspiration of the people of that country.

Instead of stepping aside, his regime has been engaged in a brutal crackdown against opposition elements. Dozens of people have been killed, and leaders of the opposition have been imprisoned.

The international community has done very little to help bring about change in Zimbabwe. We should not allow one dictator to ruin the way of life for millions of innocent civilians. Enough is enough.

The 1990s saw the spread of democracy across the continent of Africa, once dominated by military dictators and authoritarian leaders. The ghastly civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia have finally come to an end. Côte d'Ivoire now is moving in the right direction.

The DRC crisis, which erupted in 1998 and threatened to disintegrate the entire subcontinent, actually ended after a long and dedicated effort by African leaders that came up with a solution to that war of many countries in the DRC. In 2006, the Democratic Republic of Congo held its first democratic elections in years. Yet Zimbabwe still suffers from a brutal dictatorship.

The African Union, despite limited resources and capacity to deploy peacekeepers to a number of countries, have done so in several instances without delay. The African Union deployed an African mission to Burundi back in May of 2003 after an agreement was signed in order to support a cease-fire accord and to ensure implementation of the agreement. Troops have been deployed to Sudan in the north-south dispute and even to the Darfur region. Actually, in Somalia, Ugandan peacekeepers are there under the auspices of the A.U., even though there is a controversial intrusion of Ethiopian troops. Yet the A.U. has not been as vocal as many believe it should have been in the support of the suffering people of Zimbabwe. African leaders must speak out.

Prime Minister Odinga of Kenya, a long-time democracy advocate, said it right. He recently stated, ''It is sad that many African heads of state have remained quiet when disaster is looming in Zimbabwe.'' We must act now to end the suffering. We must do what we can to protect and support the people of Zimbabwe.

My resolution, H. Res. 1230, calls for an immediate end to the violence, harassment and destruction that is ongoing in Zimbabwe at the expense of a once vibrant population.

It calls on the government of Zimbabwe to create an environment conducive to a peaceful transition.

It encourages the political parties to commit to forming a government that reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people and promotes national unity, the restoration of the rule of law, and genuine democracy.

It advocates a mechanism such as a Truth and Reconciliation Commission through which to ensure accountability of all groups and individuals who are found to have orchestrated or committed a human rights violation in the context of the election.

It urges the United Nations, A.U. and SADC to dispatch special envoys to Zimbabwe without delay, with a mandate to monitor the run-off elections and to come up with a peaceful resolution to the problem.

It urges the international community, under the leadership of the U.N., A.U., SADC and the SADC Parliamentary Forum to deploy teams of credible persons to serve as monitors to ensure that the outcome of the presidential run-off elections reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people.

We conclude by commending the people of Zimbabwe for their continued courage in the face of systematic prosecution and intimidation and abuse, and commit to providing continued humanitarian assistance until the economic crisis is resolved.

It commends the actions being taken by activists, civil society, churches, people who are in support of human rights and the rule of law in Zimbabwe, and we stand in solidarity with the people of Zimbabwe.

I urge my colleagues to support the resolution and support this peaceful reconciliation, national healing, and let's restore democracy to Zimbabwe and lead this country back to the greatness that it once had.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1230, which conveys a very clear and unmistakable condemnation of the violence we have seen in Zimbabwe following the elections in that country. I strongly support the resolution's call for a peaceful solution to the grave crisis there today.

If anyone had a doubt about the regime of Robert Mugabe before this

most recent wave of government-inspired violence, surely this thug has dispelled it now.

Mugabe has clamped down on the press and has thwarted the assembly of the opposition, detaining his opposition figures on numerous occasions. We have heard gut-wrenching testimony and seen gruesome pictures of the intimidation, the violence and the torture of those who disagree with this dictator.

And there are credible reports that some 36 people have been murdered by those loyal to Mugabe.

The opposition candidate, Morgan Tsvangirai, was courageous to return to his country, but we have all held our breath as Mugabe's forces have detained him several times.

No one feels safe in Zimbabwe today, Madam Speaker. Even United States diplomats attempting to monitor the regime's abuses have been harassed, their access to public places restricted.

Mugabe has even stooped to the pilfering of food aid and has halted international relief operations.

With a run-off election scheduled for June 27, we need to send a message, a good, strong, bipartisan message, that we in the United States and the world expect fair, peaceful balloting. The will of the people must be heard.

I ask the support of my colleagues for this resolution and pledge my support for the people of Zimbabwe in these very difficult times.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished ranking member from California.

Mr. ROYCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I'd also like to just take this opportunity to recognize Chairman PAYNE not just for this resolution but for all of his long years of work on engagement on the continent against human rights abuses, to end apartheid, to advance the cause of democracy, and I appreciate him introducing this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I would just like to also add my view that President Mugabe has destroyed the rule of law now in his country, in Zimbabwe, and 3 million people, as a result of the chaos, have fled. Life expectancy there is down to 34 years.

A bread basket has been turned into a basket case where there's little access for food and certainly no food available for those who are in areas where they're trying to support the Movement for Democratic Change.

It is becoming clear, I think, to many of us that President Mugabe will stop at nothing to prevent being voted out of office next week, and the run-off election comes after the March election in which the opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, bested Robert Mugabe in that election, but because of the government's brutal machinations fell short of the 50 percent.

Since that time, what really concerns us as Members of the House is that Mugabe's agents, some of them trained by the North Koreans by the way, by North Korean troops, have been let loose in an effort to terrorize that country. There's an effort to force people to vote for President Mugabe, and we have read and seen the threats and the beatings, the abductions, the burnings of homes, the murders.

Opposition reports indicate that of the opposition of Mugabe, 60 members of the opposition have now been killed, including four who had their eyes and tongues cut out.

Food is being used to reward supporters and obviously punish opponents, and Mugabe's campaign for reelection, frankly, more closely now resembles a war against his own country. You see the attacks there on the human rights groups, the churches, the unions, the rural communities that supported the opposition, and those have been targets for repeated beatings and attacks.

Indeed, Mugabe has promised war, that's his word ''war,'' if his opponent triumphs in the election. So this is no environment right now for a fair and free election, but just as disturbing to me has been the reaction from the international community and the region.

□ 1330

The United Nations gave Robert Mugabe a stage to cynically mock his victims, participating in a food conference in Rome this month while at the same time he is withholding food at home. South African President Thabo Mbeki unfortunately has dedicated himself to shielding Mugabe from criticism. And shortly after the March election, Mbeki flew to Harare to meet with Robert Mugabe and declare ''there is no crisis.''

I think the Washington Post got it right on their editorial page where they clarify Mbeki's role in the crisis very succinctly. And the Post said he shares ''the responsibility for the atrocities being committed in full view of the world because, like Mr. Mugabe, Mr. Mbeki deserves to be condemned and shunned by the democratic world.''

This is the crisis that we face, the crisis in Zimbabwe, and it is a crisis largely of Mugabe's own making. So it is time to let the will of Zimbabweans be heard and end, frankly, what has become a reign of terror and of enormous human suffering. And again, I commend Chairman PAYNE for bringing this resolution forward.

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I reserve my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I would like to again thank my good friend and colleague, Mr. PAYNE, for his sponsorship of this resolution. I think it sends a clear message to Zimbabwe and to Mugabe himself and to all of the enablers that have not done their fair part in trying to mitigate and hopefully end this crisis.

And I want to thank Mr. ROYCE for his very eloquent statement made just a moment ago and for his leadership as well.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, let me express my appreciation to the ranking member of the Africa Subcommittee, Mr. SMITH from New Jersey, for all the good work that he continues to do in the human rights area, and to the former Chair of the Africa subcommittee, Mr. ROYCE, who continues to maintain a very strong interest in the continent.

We owe it to the people of Zimbabwe. The inflation rate is over 165,000 percent, worst in the world, almost impossible to calculate. Several weeks ago, Mr. Mugabe expelled the remaining international humanitarian aid groups from his country, therefore making it even worse for his people. And so we must see a change.

With that, Madam Speaker, I urge passage of H. Res. 1230 and urge my colleagues to support it.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1230, Condemning Postelection Violence in Zimbabwe and Calling for a Peaceful Resolution to the Current Political Crisis; introduced by my distinguished colleague from New Jersey, Representative DONALD PAYNE, of which I am a proud cosponsor. This important legislation calls on all security forces, informal militias and individuals to immediately cease attacks on and abuse of civilians.

The Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front, ZANU–PF, led by President Robert Mugabe, has controlled Zimbabwe's executive and legislative branches for 28 years; over the past 8 years, ZANU–PF has suppressed political dissidents and won elections and referendums through the use of vote rigging, localized violence, harassment, and intimidation. The political and economic situation in Zimbabwe has been worsening since 2000, culminating in the current electoral crisis.

In the wake of the elections, President Mugabe has unleashed security forces and militia against opposition supporters and members of civil society. Over 900 people have been tortured and beaten, and 22 have been confirmed dead. The offices of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network have been raided and some of its employees detained. Security forces have attacked humanitarian organizations and civil society groups.

Madam Speaker, such atrocities must come to an end. While the African Union, AU, and Southern African Development Community, SADC, have been continually engaged in efforts to bring about an end to the political crisis in Zimbabwe; unfortunately, after the AU and SADC dispatched delegations to Harare, they have not yet successfully compelled the Government of Zimbabwe to restore the rule of law.

The people of Zimbabwe are in desperate need of our aid. A prime example of this is represented through Zimbabwe's gross domestic product which declined about 43 percent between 2000 and 2007, and the unemployment rate of 80 percent. Zimbabwe's inflation rate, at almost 165,000 percent, is the

highest in the world and has contributed significantly to the country's economic collapse. Additionally, worsening economic conditions and commodity shortages have caused at least 3 million people to flee the country.

I firmly believe that we must pass this legislation in order to demonstrate through our actions that the people of the United States, local, State, national organizations and governmental institutions support democracy and oppose tyranny.

All parties must engage constructively towards peace and reconciliation for the sake of the Zimbabwean people. The people of Zimbabwe deserve the assistance of the international community in the restoration of fundamental human rights, democratic freedom, and the rule of law. That is why we must pass H. Res. 1230.

I am proud to support this legislation and I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in so doing.

Mr. PAYNE. 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. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1230, 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. 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.

COMMENDING THE EFFORTS OF THOSE WHO SOUGHT TO BLOCK AN INTERNATIONAL ARMS TRANSFER DESTINED FOR ZIMBABWE

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1270) commending the efforts of those who sought to block an international arms transfer destined for Zimbabwe, where the government has unleashed a campaign of violence and intimidation against members of the political opposition, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1270

Whereas following the conduct of presidential and parliamentary elections on March 29, 2008, Zimbabwe's liberator-turned-despot, Robert Mugabe, unleashed a campaign of terror and intimidation against opposition members, supporters, and other civilians in a desperate attempt to cling to power;

Whereas human rights groups have documented numerous incidents of state-sponsored political violence in Zimbabwe in recent years, and substantial political violence and human rights violations committed by government agents accompanied parliamentary elections in 2000 and 2005, and the presidential election in 2002;

Whereas reports from the region indicate that the Mugabe regime intends to continue this well-established pattern of state-sponsored and targeted violence and intimidation in the run-up to a second round of voting on June 27, 2008;

Whereas the Department of State found in its 2007 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices that the Mugabe regime ''engaged in the pervasive and systematic abuse of human rights, which increased significantly'' in 2007, and reported that ''state-sanctioned use of excessive force increased, and security forces tortured members of the opposition, student leaders, and civil society activists'';

Whereas the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum documented 586 incidents of torture, 855 incidents of assault, and 19 incidents of politically-motivated abductions and kidnappings in 2007 alone;

Whereas Freedom House declared the Mugabe regime to be one of ''the world's most repressive'';

Whereas Human Rights Watch reported on April 19, 2008, that the Mugabe regime had established a network of informal detention centers to beat, torture, and intimidate political opponents and other civilians;

Whereas following the March 29 elections in Zimbabwe, a Chinese vessel, the An Yue Jiang, arrived in South Africa carrying a shipment of weapons for the Zimbabwean Defense Force that reportedly included 3,000,000 rounds of AK–47 ammunition, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades, and 3,000 mortar bombs and tubes;

Whereas the delivery of such arms would only further degrade the security situation in Zimbabwe, which has already been compromised, as the materiel are likely to be used by government security forces and militias to further abuse, torture, and kill members of the political opposition and other civilians;

Whereas the dock and freight workers of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union refused to unload the shipment or transport its cargo;

Whereas the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) called for an international boycott of the vessel, stating, ''There's no prospect of there being a sudden external invasion of Zimbabwe. And so it is very difficult for anyone to conclude that this ammunition is likely to be used for anything other than to take action against opposition groups'';

Whereas the Congress of Southern African Trade Unions joined in the call by the ITF and others for an international boycott of the vessel;

Whereas the High Court of the South African port city of Durban blocked the reported weapons transfer and ordered South African authorities to prevent the vessel's passage through South African waters;

Whereas press reports suggest that other governments in the region, including those of Mozambique and Tanzania also denied the vessel permission to dock at their ports;

Whereas Zambian President and Southern African Development Community (SADC) Chairman Levy Mwanawasa commended South Africa and Mozambique for blocking the arms shipment, stating, ''I hope this will be the case with all the countries because we do not want a situation which will escalate the situation in Zimbabwe more than what it is'';

Whereas despite the SADC chairman's appeal to member nations to block the delivery of ammunition of Zimbabwe and China's alleged recall of the An Yue Jiang, Zimbabwe's Deputy Information Minister Bright Matonga announced the shipment had arrived in Harare on or around May 16, 2008;

Whereas while Beijing has denied that the shipment reached its destination, speculation on the possible surreptitious delivery of weapons to Harare continues;

Whereas the United States has been vocal in its condemnation of the atrocities and violence in Zimbabwe, and has implemented targeted financial and travel sanctions against select members of the Mugabe regime and others who ''have engaged in actions or policies to undermine Zimbabwe's democratic processes or institutions'';

Whereas in violation of the Vienna Convention, American diplomats and officials from other embassies in Harare have been repeatedly harassed by elements of the Mugabe regime in retaliation for their repeated protests against the ongoing state-sponsored campaign of terror ahead of the June 27 presidential runoff election, including the detention of the American ambassador's vehicle for several hours on May 13, 2008, and the detention of 5 American embassy staff and 2 local embassy workers on June 5, 2008; and

Whereas Congress expressed its opposition to the Mugabe regime's undemocratic policies in the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001, and other subsequent legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes and commends the efforts of southern African trade unions, religious leaders, and advocacy groups to raise awareness about the possible weapons transfer to Zimbabwe as part of a campaign to address the worsening political, economic, and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe;

(2) recognizes and commends the efforts of those southern African governments which denied access through their national territories for a weapons shipment destined to be received by a regime that continues to perpetuate gross human rights violations against its own citizens;

(3) urges the United States to continue to work with African governments and multilateral institutions to compel Robert Mugabe's regime to respect the will of its citizens and find a peaceful and timely solution to the current political standoff; and

(4) urges the Permanent Representative of the United States at the United Nations to advocate for an international moratorium on all shipments of arms, weapons, and related goods and services to Zimbabwe until the current political crisis has been resolved and democracy, human rights, and the rule of law are respected by the Government of Zimbabwe.

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, let me begin by thanking the ranking member of the full committee, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for introducing this very important resolution.

Since the March 29, 2008 presidential and parliamentarian elections in Zimbabwe and the 5-week delay in announcing the presidential victory, President Robert Mugabe of ZANU–PF has carried out a reign of terror on opposition supporters, opposition leaders, and civil society. Mr. Mugabe's effort to coerce and intimidate the people of Zimbabwe before the June 27 runoff have included the torture and beating of over 900 people and the loss of dozens of lives.

I strongly support H. Res. 1270, commending the efforts of the southern African governments who sought to block an international arms transfer destined for Zimbabwe.

The resolution specifically, one, recognizes and commends the efforts of southern African trade unions, religious leaders and advocacy groups to raise awareness about the possibility of weapons transfers to Zimbabwe as part of the campaign to address the worsening political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe; recognizes and commends the effort of those southern African governments which denied access through their national territories for a weapons shipment destined to be received by a regime that continues to perpetuate gross human rights violations against its own citizens; urges the United States to continue to work with African governments and multilateral institutions to compel Mr. Robert Mugabe's regime to respect the will of its citizens and find a peaceful and timely solution to the current political standoff; and urges the Permanent Representative to the United States at the United Nations to advocate for an international moratorium on all shipments of arms, weapons, and related goods and services to Zimbabwe until the current political crisis has been resolved and democracy, human rights and the rule of law are respected by the Government of Zimbabwe.

The successful transportation of arms into Zimbabwe may have increased the political violence that already exists. It is critically important that the international community work together with regional leaders at the Africa Union and sub-regional organizations to foster a peaceful resolution towards the human rights violations facing the Zimbabwean people.

Madam Speaker, with that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Nonproliferation.

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, of which I am an original cosponsor. I worked on this draft.

And as we previously discussed during the debate of Mr. PAYNE's previous resolution, Zimbabwe is in very grim shape. We had a flawed election there in March, and Robert Mugabe launched a campaign of terror on his population as a consequence of that election going against him.

But Madam Speaker, this string of violence really could have turned into a blood bath were it not for the South African dock workers who stood up to say ''No.'' While post-election tensions there were very high, a Chinese ship pulled into the South African port of Durban to unload its cargo that was destined for Zimbabwe. On board were 3 million rounds of assault rifle ammunition, 3,000 mortar rounds, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades. Left to the South African Government, whose President, Mbeki, has worked to protect Mugabe, the shipment would have no doubt been delivered. But fortunately the citizens of South Africa are ahead of their government in realizing the odious nature of the Zimbabwe regime and the members of that dock workers union stood upon and said ''No.'' A newspaper published the details of the shipment. The dock workers refused to unload it, public interest groups obtained a court order preventing the weapons transit. And denied access in South Africa, the ''ship of shame'' as South Africans began to call it, as African civil society dubbed it, went on to Mozambique, where it was turned away, went on to other ports in other countries where it was turned away, and it steamed back to China.

Africans stood up for fellow Africans; an inspiring event, indeed. And frankly, it reminded me in the early 1970s of when we saw a labor leader at a Polish port who stood up, and his name was Lech Walesa. And he faced off against Soviet tyranny and he demanded democracy and freedom for Poland. There were echoes of Lech Walesa in the South African port workers as they said they were not going to play a role in Mugabe's brutality.

Madam Speaker, the ''ship of shame'' also highlights the destructive role of China on the African continent, which has played the role of enabler in other African violence there. During the incident, a Chinese spokesman described the shipment as ''normal trade in military products,'' which speaks volumes about Beijing's policy of supplying weapons to regimes like Zimbabwe and Sudan.

China provided machetes to the Rwandan Government to carry out its 1994 genocide. It does this for political influence and for economic gain. And China is currently Zimbabwe's largest investor and second largest trading partner, where it secures much-needed natural resources.

China will, for the foreseeable future, continue to turn a blind eye to the conflicts that it helps ignite, all the while sticking to its so-called ''principle'' of ''noninterference.'' Clearly, this includes genocide and potential mass violence.

But this resolution is about Africans. We should give credit, as this resolution does, to those countries that have taken a strong stand, refusing to become complicit, no matter how small a role, in the fomentation of violence. And that is what these dock workers and others in civil society in Africa stood up and did. And I urge passage.

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

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

And I, too, rise in strong support of H. Res. 1270 and want to commend our ranking member, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for authoring this and helping to bring it to the floor. And I thank the majority for its support, including Chairman PAYNE, of this important resolution.

This resolution addresses the courage of those brave souls who took a stand for peace and democracy as they sought to block an arms shipment that was headed for Zimbabwe. I also strongly support this resolution's call for an arms embargo against the Mugabe regime.

In these dark days in Zimbabwe, it is encouraging that we recognize something positive, the efforts of those who have tried to stop the violence, the intimidation, and the bloodshed that have become the hallmark of the Mugabe regime.

It is no secret to the people of Zimbabwe or to those in the region that this regime has become the poster child for human rights abuses, but in order to bring about change in Zimbabwe those in the region and the wider international community have to take a real stand. That is what dock and freight workers did in the port city of Durban, South Africa, when a Chinese ship reportedly carrying millions of rounds of AK–47 ammunition, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades, and thousands of other bombs for the Zimbabwean Defense Force came into port in early April. The dock and freight workers, as my colleagues have already told us, of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union refused to offload the weapons—another reason why I like labor unions. They refused to get the blood of the people of Zimbabwe on their hands. With other civic groups of South Africa supporting the workers, a movement grew for an international boycott of the Chinese ship. Eventually, the governments of South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania denied the ship permission to enter their ports.

Now I ask my colleagues to support a move to go a step further and support an international arms embargo against Zimbabwe for as long as Mugabe and his cronies are undermining democracy and using violence in that country. The more weapons that enter Zimbabwe, the more likely that Mugabe's forces will use them against their opponents.

H. Res. 1270 will send a message to the international community and to Mugabe himself that civilized nations will not sit by and allow him to run roughshod over his own people. It remains to be seen if China will see fit to

place principle over profit and ensure that its weapons stay out of Mugabe's hands. Its track record not just in Zimbabwe, but also in Sudan, has not been a good one, and so, frankly, I would not be that optimistic about China's performance in the future.

This is a good resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Let me conclude by once again thanking the sponsor of this very important resolution. I think it's been said very clearly that when people stand up, we can defeat tyranny.

I compliment the dock workers who refused to unload the ship. As has been mentioned, the solidarity movement in Poland led to democracy there. And actually, back in the sixties, there was an incident during the height of the Cold War where the dock workers of Newark refused to unload a ship of furs from the Soviet Union.

□ 1345

At that time, Krushchev said they were going to bury the U.S., and the ILA and the dock workers refused to unload that ship, once again showing solidarity. As a person who worked on the docks of Newark for 4 years during my early career, I certainly appreciate the strength of the dock workers and the labor unions and ILA from around the world.

I think we have to work on proliferation of conventional weapons that we see throughout the world. I think we have to really monitor and rein in the People's Republic of China that continues to support the brutal regime in Sudan with the atrocities in Darfur. We have to say that if we are going to be a country living in the community of world nations, then there is a responsibility to act responsibly in this new millennium.

And so with that, I urge the passage of House Resolution 1270.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1270, which commends the efforts of those who sought to block an international arms transfer destined for Zimbabwe, and calls for an arms embargo against the Mugabe regime.

There was a time when Robert Mugabe spoke persuasively about an independent Zimbabwe governed by majority rule and inspired millions.

And when Zimbabwe finally won its independence, Mugabe was hailed as a liberator and a hero.

But at some point over the past 28 years, the vision of a peaceful, democratic Zimbabwe became distant and grossly distorted.

As early as 1982, Mugabe unleashed his infamous North Korean-trained 5th Brigade to crush an uprising in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces, and slaughtered an estimated 20,000 of his ethnic rivals.

Later in 2005, the regime launched "Operation Clear out the Trash," destroying nearly 100,000 housing structures and depriving an estimated 700,000 people of their homes, livelihoods, or both during Zimbabwe's harsh winter.

The Mugabe regime has become a brutal kleptocracy, content to rule by the barrel of the gun, while the people of Zimbabwe struggle to survive.

Clearly, he has had a lot of practice.

Zimbabwe's disputed elections of 2000, 2002, and 2005, were all marred by substantial levels of state-sponsored violence, political repression, voter intimidation, vote-rigging and other forms of manipulation by the ruling ZANU–PF party.

That pattern not only continued, but also accelerated in the run-up to the elections of March 29th.

According to the State Department's 2007 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the Mugabe regime, "engaged in the pervasive and systematic abuse of human rights, which increased significantly [in 2007] . . . state-sanctioned use of excessive force increased . . . and security forces tortured members of the opposition, student leaders, and civil society activists."

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum documented 586 incidents of torture, 855 incidents of assault, and 19 incidents of politically-motivated abductions and kidnappings in 2007 alone.

On April 19, 2008, Human Rights Watch reported that the Mugabe regime had established a network of informal detention centers to beat, torture, and intimidate political opponents and other civilians,

In the days following the March 29th elections, reports of violent political repression, illegal farm invasions, and, other gross violations of human rights by security forces and ruling party supporters increased at alarming rates.

In a report issued earlier this month, Human Rights Watch details the systematic campaign of terror unleashed by the regime "in an effort to destroy the opposition and ensure that Mugabe wins the presidential runoff elections on June 27, 2008."

In one incident, the report quotes soldiers threatening a group of villagers by saying, "If you vote for MDC in the presidential runoff election, you have seen the bullets, we have enough for each one of you, so beware."

So when a Chinese ship arrived at the port city of Durban, South Africa, reportedly carrying 3 million rounds of AK–47 ammunition, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades, and 3,000 mortar bombs and tubes for the Zimbabwean Defense Force in early April, observers were understandably concerned.

But before the international community even knew about the potential arms transfer, the dock and freight workers of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union had taken matters into their own hands.

Determined not to contribute to the brutal suppression of opposition voices in Zimbabwe, the dock and freight workers courageously refused to offload or transport the weapons.

The International Transport Workers' Federation, the Congress of Southern African Trade Unions (COSATU), religious leaders and other advocates quickly expressed their solidarity with the workers and launched a campaign calling for an international boycott of the vessel.

Before long, the governments of South Africa, Mozambique and Tanzania reportedly were compelled to deny the ship permission to dock at their ports.

Zambian President and Southern African Development Community (SADC) Chairman Levy Mwanawasa publically praised their actions and appealed to all 14 SADC member nations to block the shipment.

The heroic efforts of the dock and freight workers, southern African trade unions, religious leaders, advocacy groups and southern African Governments to block the arms shipment deserve recognition and praise of the highest order.

Through their valor and steadfastness, these courageous individuals may ultimately save countless lives from Mugabe's reign of terror.

It is now incumbent upon all responsible nations to stand in solidarity with the governments and people of southern Africa, and to deny this murderous regime the means to continue oppressing its people.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 1270, which commends those who boldly acted to block a shipment of weapons from China to Zimbabwe, and calls for an international moratorium on any future transfers until the current political crisis has been resolved.

I particularly call upon my colleagues who support strengthened ties between the United States and China to convey to their friends in Beijing that their continued engagement with the Mugabe regime can provide no tangible benefit.

Continuing the shipment of weapons to Zimbabwe at this time only makes them complicit in the campaign of terror and intimidation that has been unleashed upon the Zimbabwean people.

If China wishes to mend its tarnished image, denying weapons sales to known perpetrators of human rights violations might be a good place to start.

Mr. PAYNE. 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 resolution, H. Res. 1270.

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.

CONDEMNING RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND WIDESPREAD PRESENCE OF ANTI-SEMITIC MATERIAL IN ARAB MEDIA AND PRESS

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1127) condemning the endemic restrictions on freedom of the press and media and public expression in the Middle East and the concurrent and widespread presence of anti-Semitic material, Holocaust denial, and incitement to violence in the Arab media and press, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1127

Whereas a free press and the right of free expression are both fundamental, universal

human rights and are essential to making governments accountable to the people from whom their powers are derived;

Whereas the nations of the Middle East, with Israel being the sole exception, suffer profound deficits when compared to the global community with regard to both measures of human development and measures of human freedom and dignity;

Whereas the Middle East is a region of vital national security interest to the United States and the twin deficits in human development and human freedom negatively affect United States efforts to help resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and to stabilize the region for the benefit of all;

Whereas overt censorship, intimidation, harassment through the civil courts, assaults by government agents on journalists and political activists, arbitrary press, and emergency laws, and extra-legal restrictions on the kinds of topics which may be addressed are endemic practices in the Middle East, though varying in degree and extent in the different Arab countries;

Whereas many of the countries engaged most actively in efforts to stifle public debate, suppress political discussion, and impose capricious limits on thought and expression are among the largest recipients of United States foreign assistance, potentially giving the mistaken impression that the United States endorses or condones the restrictive policies of the recipient countries;

Whereas Holocaust denial regularly appears throughout the Middle East in speeches and pronouncements by public figures, in articles and columns by journalists and in the resolutions of professional organizations;

Whereas continued anti-Semitic incitement invites violent action and creates an environment conducive to, and accepting of, terrorism;

Whereas the extensive restrictions on speech and expression in the Arab world are uniquely counterposed by the space left open by Arab governments for grotesque anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, incitement to violence, and glorification of terrorism;

Whereas the exception from censorship and restrictions on expression for certain kinds of hate speech are not only exploited by government proxies, but often even by Arab governments themselves, including states that nominally prohibit racial, religious, or ethnic hate speech;

Whereas in the Middle East, where the press is generally not free, where there are rules for what can and cannot be said, the persistent promulgation of hate-speech indicates an obvious and dangerous form of state endorsement;

Whereas numerous government-owned, government-sanctioned, or government-controlled publishing houses throughout the region promulgate stories of imaginary Israeli massacres, Jewish blood libels, and alleged Israeli medical experiments on Palestinian children, and produce Arabic translations of anti-Semitic tracts such as ''The Protocols of the Elders of Zion'' and ''Mein Kampf''; and

Whereas many of the same Arab governments to which the United States has turned for assistance in ending the Arab-Israeli conflict are themselves responsible for using their government-owned, government-sanctioned, or government-controlled publishing houses and media to engage in anti-Semitic incitement to violence and Holocaust denial: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) strongly condemns the endemic restrictions on freedom of the press and expression in the Arab world and the concurrent and widespread presence of anti-Semitic material, Holocaust denial, and incitement to violence in the Arab media and press;

(2) deplores the methods and practices utilized by the governments in the Middle East to exert control over the press, and on public expression, including—

(A) overt censorship;

(B) intimidation and harassment of reporters, editors, and publishers by government agents, and through manipulation of the civil courts;

(C) assaults by government agents on journalists and political activists;

(D) arbitrarily enforced press and emergency laws; and

(E) extra-legal restrictions on the kinds of topics which may be addressed either in public or in private;

(3) expresses deep concern that some Arab governments, including some that are involved in multilateral efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, use their government-owned, government-sanctioned, or government-controlled publishing houses and media to promulgate insidious, incendiary, and poisonous speech regarding Israel and the Jewish people that makes United States efforts to help resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict all the more difficult;

(4) affirms the unshakable belief of the American people in the universal right of all persons to freely and peaceably express themselves, to publish and advocate for their nonviolent beliefs, and to petition their government for redress of their grievances;

(5) calls on the President to—

(A) raise the issue of the lack of media freedom in the Middle East and the proliferation of anti-Semitic incitement in all appropriate bilateral and multilateral fora;

(B) take into account the compliance of governments throughout the region with international norms and obligations regarding media freedom and anti-Semitic incitement when determining the provision of United States assistance to those governments; and

(C) utilize the existing public diplomacy apparatus, professional development, and democratization programs to focus on the issues of media freedom and anti-Semitic incitement; and

(6) calls on United States allies and governments throughout the Middle East to publicly repudiate purveyors of anti-Semitic incitement.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask 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 York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in January of this year, the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia held a hearing entitled ''That Which Is Not Obligatory Is Prohibited: Censorship and Incitement in the Arab World.'' We received testimony from three witnesses, one each from Freedom House, the Committee To Protect Journalists, and the Anti-Defamation League. What we heard was not a surprise, but was still shocking. As a result of that hearing, I drafted this resolution and would like to ask all of my colleagues to give it their utmost consideration.

It is sad to note that in the 21st century, there is still not one Arab country that can be described as ''free'' by the metrics used by Freedom House, and frankly, by anyone actually familiar with the concept. While there are very significant differences throughout the region in the latitude given to public debate, political argument and press and media freedom, with the notable exception of Israel, not one Arab country can argue that its public square is truly open to all and that their government protects, rather than restricts, that freedom.

The ugly and typically stupid hand of the censor is unfortunately not a rare sight in the Middle East. It is not only ubiquitous, it is, in fact, often attached to the arm of the editor, the producer, the copy-writer, or the publisher. According to the United Nations' Arab Human Development reports, while Arab societies have, in general, failed to keep up with other developing nations, in the mechanisms of censorship in the Arab world, they have shown a remarkable degree of institutional adaptation and technological savvy. Their success in stifling debate and narrowing acceptable opinion is all the more remarkable given the frequent failures of Arab bureaucracies in meeting the basic needs of their people for things like education, infrastructure, economic opportunity and clean governance.

Countries that can't ensure that their citizens are literate or have clean drinking water still find the resources necessary to operate the red pen of the censor, or the self-serving manipulation of the truth endemic to government-owned, government-controlled and government-operated media. It would be nice if these ugly and ultimately self-defeating practices were merely the problem of other people in faraway places. We could pity them, think gravely about the words of Thomas Jefferson, and bless the wisdom of our Founders who, in a world of despots and danger, saw that a free press and free speech were the indispensable safeguards of our Republic and our liberty.

But we don't live in a world that gives us immunity from the troubles of others. Three thousand Americans paid the price for that lesson on September 11, 2001. If we don't visit the world's bad neighborhoods, they will visit us. The fact is, the world has grown smaller, and fair or not, the grievances between the peoples of the Middle East and their governments can be, and often are, attributed to the United States. We saw this phenomena metastasize in Iran in the late 1970s. And

we've heard the same complaints explicitly from al Qaeda's leaders. As a nation with vital national interests in that region, we have wisely built strong ties with the governments of almost all of the Arab States.

Unfortunately, while these ties have brought greater stability to the region, they have also aligned us with governments that don't share our values when it comes to political and civil human rights. Don't think for a moment that the people of these countries have not noticed. The United States speaks constantly of freedom, but is the ally of authoritarians. The United States prizes and celebrates the first amendment to our Constitution, but is in league with nations that abuse and imprison journalists. The United States uses taxpayer money to train others in the rule of law, but also works hand in glove with security forces of other governments that not only sniff out and destroy terrorists, but often do likewise to their own civil leaders and political reformers.

Like it or not, we are entangled in the conflicts between Arab publics and their governments. It is not our role nor our duty to choose the form of government for any people but ourselves.

But that does not forbid or restrict our right, and I would say our obligation, to speak out for the values that we believe are universal, including speaking out to our friends who sometimes believe that their extensive cooperation entitles them not only to our understanding and support, but our silence. I don't agree, and I don't accept such a formulation. In the end, such an approach will produce neither stability for them nor security for ourselves.

As a nation that has strayed badly over the past several years from our own ideals, we have an obligation to be humble and circumspect in condemning others. Much of the credibility America used to enjoy when speaking out on human rights has been squandered by short-sighted and morally debilitated agents of fear. But we are still a nation of ideas and a people dedicated to certain universal values, that all people are created equal, that the rule of law and due process are not luxuries but fundamental human rights, and that the freedom of speech, conscience, association and the press are not gifts from governments or rulers, but the shared inheritance of all humanity.

Moreover, for purely selfish reasons, we have ample cause to be concerned. Many of the same Arab governments which we are turning to help stabilize the region, and in particular, to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, are the very same governments that, with a wink and a nod, are helping stir the pot of bitterness and discontent among their own citizens.

For example, Arab governments that say small steps toward normalizing relations with Israel are too hard because of public opinion often use government-owned, government-sanctioned or government-controlled press and media to disseminate stories of imaginary Israeli massacres, Jewish blood-libels, alleged Israeli medical experiments on Palestinian children, and for bigots with a taste for history, cheap Arabic-language translations of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and Mein Kempf.

Moreover, in many Arab countries while there is ruthless and effective censorship, especially concerning political expression, somehow publication of vicious anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial and even incitement to violence against Jews is allowed.

These things are bad enough, but in a place where the press is not free and where there are rules for what you can and cannot say, the fact that these forms of hatred-speech are not prohibited indicates an obvious and dangerous form of state endorsement. In the end, the outcome is a public that is not only less open to peace, but is less ready to engage with the modern world.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a violent one, and the news about it inevitably reflects that fact. Likewise, revolving the core issues of that conflict does not depend on a free and honest press in the Arab world. And no state and no government is or should be above correction, criticism and complaint, not the United States, not Israel, not anyone. And to state the blindly obvious, criticism of Israeli policy is not, by definition, anti-Semitic.

But there is also no question that the cumulative weight of unreasoned and incendiary hatred toward Israel or the Jewish people which has not only been allowed but in some cases inserted into the press and media by Arab governments or their proxies has made the Middle East more violent and more dangerous.

The resolution before us will not solve these problems. But it will send a message. We are not a nation capable of indifference to either hate or oppression. We have interests in the Middle East beyond oil, and expanding the scope of human freedom is one of them. We may have strayed from our ideals, but we are trying to come home.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for their support in bringing this resolution before the House, and I urge all of our Members to support the motion and the underlying resolution.

I would reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1127, and I urge my colleagues to adopt this condemnation of the anti-Semitism that is sadly so widespread in the Arab media and the press.

As the resolution of my good friend and colleague, Mr. ACKERMAN, points out, this anti-Semitism often takes the violent forms of Holocaust denial and incitement to violence.

Madam Speaker, when political leaders fail to speak out against anti-Semitic hatred and incitement, the void is not only demoralizing to the victims, but silence actually enables the wrongdoing. Silence by political leaders, in particular, conveys official approval or at least acquiescence and contributes to a climate of fear and a sense of vulnerability.

It is tragic that modern Arab leaders have not done a better job of speaking out against anti-Semitism. We here in the U.S. Congress can speak out today. It is very important that we do so. But our words are not as effective as would be the condemnations from Arab leaders. Members of Congress are going to have to carry, as we go forward to Middle Eastern countries or meet with the leaders when they come here, the sentiments contained in this resolution, and again, as we have in the past, explain to them the importance of speaking out. We cannot remain silent any longer.

If this fight against anti-Semitism in the Arab world is to succeed, we need officials in the U.S. and Europe and again the Arab world to, without hesitation or delay, denounce anti-Semitic acts whenever and wherever they occur. There can't be any exceptions. The purveyors of hate never take a holiday or grow weary, nor should we. Holocaust remembrance and tolerance education must dramatically expand, especially in the Middle East where it is almost nonexistent, and must find a footing in the Arab world. We have to ensure that our laws and the laws of other countries punish those who incite violence against Jews. And it is not utopian to begin to encourage modern Arab governments to adopt such laws. It is time to push this issue harder, far harder than we have done so in the past.

Madam Speaker, on June 16, 2004, the Helsinki Commission held a hearing, and I chaired it, one of several in a series on combating anti-Semitism. Our prime witness at that hearing, as he had been previously, was one of the greatest, finest, most effective and certainly the most courageous human rights leaders the world has ever known, Natan Sharansky.

□ 1400

As we all know, Natan Sharansky spent years in the Soviet Gulag. Congressman FRANK WOLF and I in the 1980s actually went to Perm Camp-35 where he had spent many of his years in solitary confinement, where he had been tortured, and met with many of the political prisoners who knew him well, and they had nothing but accolades and respect for this man.

He pointed out at our hearing that, ''Thirty years ago I was a dissident in the former Soviet Union. The irony is that 30 years later I am in the same job, collecting information about anti-Semitism,'' in that case as a cabinet minister in the Israeli government.

He pointed out that the new wave of anti-Semitism is characterized by two components. The first one is the so-

called new anti-Semitism, and the lines between anti-Israeli propaganda and anti-Semitic propaganda are blurred.

He said the second is the classical anti-Semitism, the old, deep, primitive prejudice against Jews used over and over again to hurt individuals. He points out that this time, these images and this promotion of anti-Semitism is coming mainly through state-sponsored and state-supported media in the Middle East.

He pointed out that if you want to be successful in this struggle, we have to, like any other evil, we must have moral clarity about the issue. It is important to define the line between legitimate criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism. Israel, he said, is a strong democracy and the only democracy in the Middle East, and it is built on criticism from within and from without.

Of course, we support all forms of legitimate criticism, he went on, but it is very important to see the difference, draw the line between legitimate criticism and anti-Semitism.

He gave us a way of discovering it, or pointing it out and exposing it. He called it the three D's. You know it is anti-Semitism when it is all about demonization, double standard and delegitimization.

At our hearing, Madam Speaker, he brought with him a 150 page study entitled ''Anti-Semitism in the Contemporary Middle East.'' The study surveys anti-Semitic reporting, editorials and editorial caricatures in the government-controlled press of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. In the more than 100 editorial cartoons included in the report, Jews and Israelis are invariably represented as poisonous snakes, murderous Nazis and bloodthirsty crusaders. When I looked at it, I was sickened. It was disgusting.

The report found that vicious anti-Semitism expressly calls for massive terrorism and genocide against Jews, Zionists and the State of Israel. He pointed out as well in the report that the overwhelming majority of the propaganda again was from government-controlled media and from supposedly respectable publishing houses closely tied to those regimes.

In a brief review of the findings, classic European and anti-Semitic imagery is widespread in the Middle East, as is Holocaust denial and the identification of Israel as a Nazi state. The borders between anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism are blurred, almost completely blurred, the report found. Islamic religious themes, quotations and sayings are being widely mobilized to demonize Jews and Israelis and to justify the outright annihilation of the State of Israel and all its Jewish and non-Jewish supporters.

The Arab-Israeli conflict is increasingly portrayed as part of an internal confrontation between pan-Islamic nations and the infidels, Jews and Christians alike, who embody all evil. All Israelis, men and women and children, and Jews around the world, the report found, as well as their crusader allies, are held responsible for alleged crimes committed by the Jews.

He also showed at that hearing a movie, part of a movie, a 15-hour movie, an anti-Semitic film produced in Syria. That film was all about blood libel. He pointed out to us that that film is not seen just in the Middle East, and it ran for 15 hours every night during the Ramadan season, it is also seen in Europe.

We wonder why people are incited to hate Jews. We watched just a few minutes of it, and, again, it was despicable and made it seem as if blood liable was real.

Finally, Madam Speaker, Sharansky concluded by telling us that anti-Semitism is not only a threat to Jews. History has shown us that left unchecked, the forces behind anti-Semitism will imperil all the values and freedom that our civilization holds dear. We must not let that happen; to which I say again, and this resolution strongly suggests, we must not let that happen.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY), a leading spokesman on human rights and fairness.

Ms. BERKLEY. I thank the gentleman from New York. I know that he has been an outstanding voice on this issue for as many years as I can remember. Long before I came to Congress to serve with him, I would watch him on C–SPAN as he spoke about this issue, and serving with him, I admire him all the more.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this important resolution. When we talk about peace in the Middle East, we so often get caught up in the specific details that we rarely discuss the fundamental problems in that region. Unlike our country, or Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, most countries in that part of the world have very little freedom of the press and therefore very little accountability to their people.

Such restrictions on free speech serve those Middle Eastern autocrats very well, keeping their populations in line and focusing the anger of the street outside of their own borders. The populations there have very little choice but to believe the daily insults that many state-run newspapers heap on our country and on Israel. They have no other avenue by which to get their news. So instead of rebelling against their own corrupt dictators, the people of the Middle East flood their streets to burn American and Israeli flags, with little or no hope that they can change events in their own countries that are controlled by these dictatorial regimes.

Mr. Speaker, such restrictions on speech not only condemn the people of the Middle East to intellectual poverty and ignorance, they make peace harder and harder to achieve. And it is not only the media, it is also the textbooks that need to be changed. From the Palestinian territories to Saudi Arabia, Middle Eastern children are taught that Jews are monkeys and snakes and worse, and that Israel must be destroyed because it has no right to exist. Such education, both in school and in the newspapers, and such disinformation, cannot create possibly a condition for peace.

With this resolution today, we can send a clear message to the Middle East that we, the United States of America, stand with those who seek a free press, those who want to bring out the truth and let freedom ring throughout the Middle East.

To quote the resolution itself, by passing this we will affirm ''the universal rights of all persons to freely and peaceably express themselves, to publish and advocate for their nonviolent beliefs, and to petition their government for redress of grievances.''

I thank the gentleman again, and I urge support for this resolution.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, today, I was proud to support, H. Res. 1127, a bill which condemns the endemic restrictions on freedom of the press and media and public expression in the Middle East and the concurrent and widespread presence of anti-Semitic material, Holocaust denial, and incitement to violence in the Arab media and press.

The people of Israel have been victims of violence and hatred for far too long. Not only are these peace-loving individuals targets of rocket attacks and terrorist actions, they are also victims of government-censored, hateful press. It is far too common for Arab media markets to condemn Israel and promote actions which foster violence and hinder the peace process in the region. Israeli reporters and journalists have been harassed and intimidated by Middle East government officials who have placed harsh legal restrictions on what news can and cannot be reported.

I strongly believe that the universal right of all persons to peacefully express themselves in a nonviolent way should be upheld in the Middle East. It is the responsibility of the United States and the global community to condemn this lack of freedom and work to promote an environment which fosters the license of nonviolent speech and press and peace.

Mr. ACKERMAN. We yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROSS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1127, 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.

The title was amended so as to read:

''Resolution condemning the endemic restrictions on freedom of the press and media and public expression in the Middle East and the concurrent and widespread presence of anti-Semitic incitement to violence and Holocaust denial in the Arab media and press.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD END COMMERCIAL WHALING

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 350) expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States, through the International Whaling Commission, should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its forms, including scientific and other special permit whaling, coastal whaling, and community-based whaling, and seek to strengthen the conservation and management measures to facilitate the conservation of whale species, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 350

Whereas 79 nations have adopted the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (the Convention), which established the International Whaling Commission (the Commission) to provide for the conservation of whale stocks;

Whereas the Commission has adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling in order to conserve and promote the recovery of whale stocks, many of which had been hunted to near extinction by the whaling industry;

Whereas the United States was instrumental in the adoption of the moratorium, and has led international efforts to address the threat of commercial whaling for more than 3 decades;

Whereas despite the moratorium, 3 Commission member nations continue to kill whales for financial gain, disregarding the protests of other Commission members, and since the moratorium entered into force have killed more than 25,000 whales including over 11,000 whales killed under the guise of scientific research;

Whereas whaling conducted for scientific purposes has been found to be unnecessary by the majority of the world's cetacean scientists because nonlethal research alternatives exist;

Whereas the member nations of the Commission have adopted numerous resolutions opposing and calling for an end to scientific whaling, most recently in 2007 at the annual Commission meeting in Anchorage, Alaska;

Whereas commercial whaling in any form, including scientific and other special permit whaling, coastal whaling, and community-based whaling, undermines the conservation mandate of the Convention and impairs the Commission's ability to function effectively;

Whereas proposed coastal whaling is commercial, unless conducted under the aboriginal exemption to the moratorium; and

Whereas the majority of Americans oppose the killing of whales for commercial purposes and expect the United States to use all available means to end such killing: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that the United States, through the International Whaling Commission, should—

(1) should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its forms, including scientific and other special permit whaling, coastal whaling, and community-based whaling;

(2) oppose any initiative that would result in any new, Commission-sanctioned coastal or community-based whale hunting, even if it is portrayed as noncommercial, including any commercial whaling by any coastal communities that does not qualify as aboriginal subsistence whaling; and

(3) seek to strengthen conservation and management measures to facilitate the conservation of whale species.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DELAHUNT. 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 Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, first let me congratulate my colleague, the Chair of the Committee on Natural Resources, Mr. RAHALL, for putting forward this very important resolution.

The resolution sends a very clear message to all International Whaling Commission members as they prepare for their annual meeting in Santiago, Chile, later this month: Protect our whales. Keep the ban on commercial whaling. The resolution also makes it clear that the American people care deeply and passionately about the protection of these magnificent creatures, and that the United States must continue to lead this international effort to protect and save them.

Mr. Speaker, the International Whaling Commission was created in 1946 by the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling to address the devastating impact that commercial whaling was having on the entire whale population. For years, the commission failed to manage the commercial hunting of whales, leaving many species facing imminent extinction. However, this changed in 1982 when the commission finally agreed to a moratorium on commercial whaling.

However, since then, a number of countries have worked feverishly to undermine it. Norway resumed commercial whaling in 1993. Japan and Iceland have exploited provisions in the convention that allow permits for ''scientific whaling,'' a provision that enables them to slaughter whales under the guise of science and then sell the meat for commercial profits.

According to the International Fund for Animal Welfare located on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, more than 30,000 whales have been slaughtered for commercial purposes, with 11,000 whales killed allegedly in the name of science. And here is how they do it. They use harpoons with explosive grenades. Now, if the first explosion is insufficient to kill the whale, then they hoist it by the tail, keeping the blowhole underwater, leaving it helpless and thrashing against the side of the ship until eventually the whale drowns.

This is not science. The commission's own Scientific Committee has repeatedly found that these scientific permits are completely unnecessary, yet this horrific practice still continues.

Japan and other pro-whaling states want to unravel the global consensus against commercial whaling even further.

□ 1415

Their latest proposal is to allow coastal whaling or community whaling. They have worked hard to recruit allies to their side.

The 75-plus member commission is now almost evenly split. This resolution, H. Con. Res. 350, calls on the United States delegation to the commission to fight these efforts and aggressively oppose commercial whaling in all of its forms. It's critical that the State Department take the pro-whaling threat seriously and undertake an aggressive diplomacy to line up the requisite votes to preserve the moratorium.

Mr. RAHALL's resolution sets an important marker. Whales constitute a vital component of the world's maritime and marine ecology. They are the largest and one of the most intelligent mammals on earth. Conserving them requires strong U.S. diplomacy to uphold international agreements.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 350, which raises congressional concerns about the continued practice of whale hunting.

With the 60th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission set to begin in Santiago, Chile, it is fitting and proper to consider this resolution. Over two decades after this Commission adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling, the hunt continues.

The humpback whale, a species designated as endangered under the provisions of the U.S. Endangered Species Act, was included among those whales pursued in the most recent hunting season. The marine life in our oceans, as we all know, including the whale, forms a precious part of these natural resources which we should strive to preserve.

Mr. Speaker, I support the resolution and reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, let me now recognize the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans, the gentlelady from Guam

(Ms. BORDALLO) for as much time as she may consume.

Ms. BORDALLO. I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) for yielding me the time and for his leadership in working toward permanent protection of whale populations around the world. I join him in these efforts.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 350, authored by our committee chair, Mr. RAHALL, which calls for an end to commercial whaling in all its forms and for renewed United States leadership for conservation of whale species. Consideration of this resolution today could not be more timely or needed in advance of next week's meeting of the International Whaling Commission, or the IWC, in Chile.

House Concurrent Resolution 350 calls the United States delegation to the IWC to maintain the commercial moratorium, close existing loopholes that have allowed more than 11,000 whales to be killed under the guise of scientific whaling, and oppose any effort that would undermine the moratorium or resume commercial whaling. The United States has an opportunity and a responsibility to help refocus the IWC toward its important conservation aims.

Established under the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling as an international body to conserve whales for future generations and to regulate the whaling industry, the International Whaling Commission initially focused on the allocation of whaling quotas to member countries. When these quotas were routinely exceeded and whale populations plummeted, the United States successfully proposed a whaling ban, which, in turn, led to the international moratorium on commercial whaling.

The moratorium has saved thousands and thousands of whales and has prevented some species from extinction. Under the convention, however, members lodging a formal objection are not bound by the moratorium. Both Norway and Iceland used this process to escape the moratorium. Similarly, the convention allows for the killing of whales for research purposes under self-awarded special permit quotas, and there are no limitations on the commercial sale of the meat.

Both Japan and Iceland kill whales under the guise of scientific whaling. The IWC scientific committee has consistently challenged the science behind Japan's special permit whaling programs, questioning the need to kill, while also reinforcing the value of nonlethal methods to study whales.

Despite this, Japan continues to increase the quotas and the species of whale it targets. The continued development of the IWC as a whale conservation body is at risk. Today prowhaling countries are increasingly working to convince IWC members that the body is unworkable. They do so through vigorous country recruitment and a gradual erosion of the will of conservation-minded IWC members.

The IWC, now divided almost equally in favor for and against commercial whaling, declared itself at a deadlock in 2007. The meeting next week is therefore pivotal and consequential to the success and the future effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission.

Pro-whaling countries will repeatedly ask for a resumption of commercial whaling. Such countries are also pushing for the approval of coastal or community-based whaling, which should not be confused with subsistence whaling for our native peoples and which have been determined to be another label for commercial whaling. The world's whale population cannot afford a compromise on the commercial whaling moratorium, nor should the United States be intimidated by countries who threaten to leave the IWC if their requests are not met.

The world's remaining whale populations, many of which have yet to fully recover from historic overexploitation, face modern threats from ship strikes, entanglement in fishing gear, pollution, overfishing or prey species, and the emerging impacts of climate change. This warrants greater, not lesser, leadership from the United States in whale conservation.

It is for these reasons that I have cosponsored House Concurrent Resolution 350. I commend Chairman RAHALL for introducing this resolution and his invaluable leadership in working to strengthen the IWC.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. Together, we call on the United States delegation to work with its International Whaling Commission partners to end all forms of commercial whaling and to conserve and protect whale species.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), ranking member of the Committee on Natural Resources.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution and deeply respect the previous speakers.

I understand why they are trying to do this. It's unfortunate that some people don't remember the whaling industry started in Massachusetts, and maybe they're trying to forgive their sins.

Having said that, this resolution is being brought up under a procedure that does not allow amendments, and frankly this resolution does nothing to save the whales. More than 37,000 whales have been taken since the International Whaling Commission, IWC, implemented a moratorium on commercial whaling.

Under the existing International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, member nations of the IWC could continue to take whales under a number of procedures. While I do not necessarily support commercial whaling, the current convention allows it for those nations that took a reservation against a commercial whaling moratorium.

This resolution naively suggests the United States can somehow end commercial whaling by itself at the next meeting of the International Whaling Commission, which starts next week. Very frankly, this resolution is nothing more than a fund-raising gimmick for those environmental groups that oppose whaling.

This resolution does nothing to save the whales. In fact, it might do the opposite. If the IWC cannot come to some agreement on how to move forward, Norway, Iceland and Japan have all signaled in recent years that they want to take either more whales or more species of whales. Under the current rules they can do so. This resolution may do nothing more than encourage those countries that dig in their heels to increase their take of whales.

In addition, the resolution says nothing about the need for the United States delegation to the IWC to protect the Native rights to harvest whales. To the Native people on the North Slope of Alaska, whales mean food. Alaska Natives have harvested whales for centuries, and they continue to do so today.

Although they have taken whales for centuries and depend on the bowhead whale to survive, they must constantly defend their need and their cultural heritage. I want to compliment my Alaskan Natives on our North Slope. They were told there were only 500 whales left when they were put on the endangered species list.

They did not believe that. They hired the best professors, the best scientists in the world, and, in fact, found out there are over 15,000 bowhead whales, just to prove the point that the science was wrong.

To the Native people on the North Slope of Alaska, whales mean food. This is not an issue of politics to them.

They have done everything the IWC has ever asked them, and they still get their quota taken away from them because people think using the whaling issue is good for fund-raising. The Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission has done more scientific research on bowhead whales than any government has ever done on any whale species. Every time the quota is up for renewal in the IWC, someone comes up with a new theory on why Alaskans should not be allowed to take the number of whales they need. And again I will say ''need.''

Their quota is based on their need for whales as food. I can't say that enough, for food. To them, the whale is a necessary part of their culture and a necessary part of their dietary needs. Every time their quota is up, someone comes along and puts another hurdle in front of them that they must meet to get their quota.

The International Whaling Commission is broken. There are two groups of countries that show up each meeting and fight about which one of them has the moral high ground. There are those countries that are anti-whaling and those countries that are pro-whaling.

The two sides have been in an arms race for years to see which side can get more countries to join the IWC so they can have a simple majority and pass a meaningless resolution before the other side gets a majority and passes meaningless resolutions to support their point of view. Neither side is ever likely to get enough countries on their side to make any change in the convention because it takes a three-fourths vote. While they are having this fight about which side has the moral high ground, they use the Native people, who rely on whales for food, as political hostages.

At the 2002 meeting in Japan, the Alaskan Eskimo Whaling Commission's quota was denied because of those policies. It took a special meeting of the IWC to restore the quota to my constituents. This is not a matter to be taken lightly and cannot continue. Alaska's quota cannot be held hostage every 5 years for other countries' political whims. It cannot be held to a higher standard and required to do more and more to satisfy someone's new theory about the bowhead whale that might mean a change for the Alaskan quota.

Members need to be very careful about how they talk about whaling, because the United States is a whaling Nation. Alaska Natives have harvested whales for centuries, and they continue to do so today. This resolution does nothing to highlight the importance of Native peoples' need to harvest whales and may only further inflame the hostilities at the IWC and quite possibly result in an increase in the number of whales killed in the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield the gentleman an additional minute.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I hope that the member nations of the IWC will come up with something new to resolve the impasse we are at today, but I am afraid the resolutions like the one today will do nothing to resolve the problem and may actually make things worse. The only people who continue to be hurt are the Native people of Alaska, and I don't think that's right.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas, Judge POE.

□ 1430

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, last November a fleet of Japanese whalers set sail to kill more than a thousand whales, including endangered humpback whales for the first time in the last 40 years.

After international outcry, Japan agreed not to hunt the humpback whales this year, but that has not stopped them from continuing to hunt and kill more than a thousand minke and fin whales.

You see, although an international moratorium against commercial whaling has been in effect since 1986, Japan and a handful of other countries have used a loophole in the international treaty, and in the name of pseudo-scientific research, they have gone ahead and killed more than 11,000 whales.

After killing them for ''scientific research,'' as they say, they sold the whale meat and blubber on the commercial market.

Anyway, scientists in the field say that these hunts, conducted in the name of science, are really unnecessary because nonlethal research alternatives do exist.

Mr. Speaker, Moby Dick is in trouble, and it is time to close the loophole and make sure that endangered whales in our oceans are protected once and for all. In Herman Melville's book ''Moby Dick,'' Captain Ahab, who I think was from Massachusetts, died trying to kill off the whale population. Hopefully Japan's desire to eliminate the whale population, like in Moby Dick, will fail as well, and Japan and a handful of other countries will cease the whale hunts that are taking place.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Texas is correct, it was from the island of Nantucket that Captain Ahab sailed. I happen to have the honor of representing Nantucket, as well as Martha's Vineyard and Cape Cod. So we have a tradition when it comes to whaling, and we appreciate the magnificence of those whales. In fact, anyone wishing to come and visit my district, I will be happy to escort them, and I refer obviously to my colleagues, on an experience that will clearly leave an indelible mark, and that is a whale-watching trip off of Cape Cod.

In response to the gentleman from Alaska, my good friend and someone for whom I have great respect, I would simply point out that the resolution itself specifically distinguishes between commercial whaling and aboriginal sustentative whaling. I appreciate his point and I understand his concerns.

But interestingly, just this past week there was a hearing in front of the Natural Resources Subcommittee where all the witnesses, including individuals from all of the groups that he alluded to, testified in support of a sustentative quota. So I would suggest that if what Japan wants is not sustentative whaling, they could secure that approval now at the IWC. But that is not their purpose.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and we do have a great deal of admiration for one another, but you have to understand, in 2002 our quota for my Alaska Native people, their heritage and their culture was held up by one of the IWC members, Japan. And we had to have a special session to get the quota reinstated, and they should not be used as a political ping-pong ball. I want to stress that.

If I thought for a moment, and I am not for commercial whaling, but I am saying that if I thought for a moment this would stop it, I would be supportive of the resolution. But until we recognize the fact, because I do have Alaskan Natives, heritage-wise and cultural-wise, that do take whales today for needed food, they are being held hostage because we belong to the IWC.

I will tell you, my friends, what's going to happen, there is nothing that says Iceland, Japan or Greenland, wherever it may be, has to belong to the IWC. They can pull out and kill all of the whales they want to kill, and you and I can't stop that, whether it is on our endangered list or not.

I do think there ought to be a cease-fire between these groups. Quit using my people as hostages, and see if there isn't a solution of some type that will appease both sides. In the meantime, they kill 37,000 whales under the loophole, and IWC doesn't have the arbitrary right to close that loophole unless there is some agreement.

Now this resolution makes everybody feel good and look good and they can go back and say I saved the whales, but it doesn't do anything. I just think that is the wrong thing to do when, very frankly, you are hurting other people, and this is their right. And they have established the fact that there aren't 500 bullhead whales, there are 15,000 bullhead whales, and they take 19 a year of 15,000. I want you to think about that a moment.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I thank the gentleman. And as I said, I appreciate his concerns. But what Japan wants, as I suggested, is commercial whaling and it clearly is not the intent of this resolution to hurt the gentleman's constituents in Alaska. Clearly we have great respect and understand their culture and their tradition. That is not the intent of this resolution. But I'm sure that the gentleman's remarks and observations should be listened to and heeded when the Department of State goes to the IWC in Santiago, Chile.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, as cochair of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 350, which states that the United States, through the International Whaling Commission, IWC, should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all its forms, and seek to strengthen whale conservation.

In 1986, the IWC instituted a moratorium on the commercial killing of whales. In spite of this, some countries continue to hunt whales under the guise of scientific research.

For example, in November 2007, the Japanese whaling fleet set out for the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary with plans to kill over

1,000 whales. Whale meat and blubber are sold commercially, yet Japan continues to insist that this is permissible under the scientific research provision of the IWC.

Not only has Japan increased the number of whales it plans to kill this year, it has also declared it will kill 50 endangered humpback whales. Since 1960, humpbacks have been fully protected from commercial whaling by the IWC.

The Japanese whaling fleet's continued circumvention of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling is truly an outrage. The IWC has repeatedly condemned this hunt, urging an end to this needless and brutal slaughter. The U.S. delegation to the IWC must stand firmly opposed to this shameful practice, and reaffirm its commitment to protecting whales from commercial hunting. I urge support of H. Con. Res. 350.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 350, Expressing the sense of the Congress that the United States, through the International Whaling Commission, should use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its forms, including scientific and other special permit whaling, coastal whaling, and community-based whaling, and seek to strengthen the conservation and management measures to facilitate the conservation of whale species, and for other purposes, introduced by my distinguished colleague from West Virginia, Representative NICK RAHALL, and of which I am a proud cosponsor. This legislation is an important step in the conservation of the precious whale species.

As of today, 79 nations have adopted the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, which established the International Whaling Commission to provide for the conservation of whale stocks. The United States was instrumental in influencing the Commission to adopt a moratorium on commercial whaling, which is important in order to conserve and promote the recovery of whale stocks, many of which had been hunted to near extinction by the whaling industry.

However, three International Whaling Commission member nations continue to kill whales for financial gain, killing more than 25,000 whales since the moratorium, over 11,000 of which were killed under the guise of scientific research. Because nonlethal research alternatives exist, the majority of the world's cetacean scientists have found whaling conducted for scientific purposes unnecessary. Numerous resolutions have been adopted by the member nations of the International Whaling Commission opposing and calling for an end to scientific whaling, most recently in 2007 at the annual Commission meeting in Anchorage, Alaska.

Whaling undermines the conservation mandate of the International Whaling Commission and impairs the Commission's ability to function effectively. Allowing whaling for commercial purposes, or under the false guise of scientific research, is reprehensible. This whaling must end now. Additionally, the majority of Americans oppose killing whales for commercial purposes. They expect the Members of Congress to do all in their means to end this killing. We must listen to the American people on this issue.

By passing this legislation, we affirm to the American people our commitment to ending whaling in any form, including scientific and other special permit whaling, coastal whaling, and community-based whaling. It is an important step towards saving the whale species. Surely, this legislation should not be ignored.

H. Con. Res. 350 would encourage Congress to use all appropriate measures to end commercial whaling in all of its forms, oppose any initiative that would result in new whale hunting, and seek to strengthen conservation and management measures to facilitate the conservation of the whale species. I urge my fellow members of Congress to support this legislation.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 350.

Next week the International Whaling Commission will host its annual meeting in Santiago, Chile, and representatives from 80 nations will come together to discuss the future of international whale conservation efforts. This presents a rare opportunity for our country to exercise real leadership in the fight to strengthen whale protection measures, preserving these rare creatures for future generations.

The meeting comes at a historic time in the debate over commercial whaling. International outrage is at an all time high while support for ending scientific whaling permits is also at its peak. In certain countries such as Japan, whaling is no longer even profitable and must be subsidized by the government.

For these reasons and many more, the IWC should seize this opportunity to close the loophole in the 1985 ban on commercial whaling that has allowed far too many countries to continue their commercial whaling programs which have been disguised as ''scientific'' whaling efforts. It's time for the world to abolish whaling practices altogether, and I'm hopeful that the IWC does not squander this opportunity to put an end to this brutal practice.

Phasing out all forms of commercial whaling is the only way to deal with this crisis. Those who suggest that fewer whales may be killed if a compromise is reached with pro-whaling nations to allow costal or community-based whaling could not be more ill-advised; this type of compromise would squander this historic opportunity we have to finally put an end to this brutal practice.

The fact remains that whaling is simply not sustainable in our world. Though some would have us believe that whale populations have recovered sufficiently to renew hunting, recent studies have shown increases in global populations over the last 20 years are only marginal. These small increases in no way signal that the populations have fully recovered, for in reality, past population estimates indicate that some species were once 6 to 20 times more populous than they are today. For example, scientists believe there were once 240,000 humpback whales in the North Atlantic; today only 10,000 remain.

Even if whales have recovered to their preindustrial numbers, sustainable whaling would still be nearly impossible. Most people do not know that whale populations are local, and groups rarely mingle or interbreed. For instance, scientists believe that a distinct population of Minke whales off the coast of Japan is already on the verge of collapse. Allowing unfettered ''community'' whaling or any form of commercial shore-based whaling would quickly lead to the Minke's extinction in the Sea of Japan.

The United States must firmly oppose any form of commercial whaling; to allow even limited commercial whaling puts the entire species at risk. Multiple whales would be fraudulently sold under the same permit because short of genetic testing, there is no way to distinguish the meat of two different whales. This is already a problem in Korea and Japan, where it is common to market poached whales under the guise of an accidental kill, which is eligible for sale.

Some have also falsely claimed that this bill will harm the ability of Native Alaskans to continue subsistence whaling, when in reality no one is disputing the right of Alaskan natives to continue their way of life. In fact, the bill protects Native Alaskans' way of life by defending their food source from overexploitation and extirpation. Additionally, if coastal whaling is allowed, Natives would be forced to compete for permits with commercial operations, and the resulting difficulties would do more to endanger their culture and way of life than this bill ever could.

Ending whaling does not merely promote humane treatment of animals, nor is it solely about conserving natural resources. It is also an issue of global health. With high concentrations of mercury and other toxins in their blubber, whales make an unhealthy meal with vast public health risks. Mercury has been found in concentrations that are hundreds of times higher than the acceptable levels. Japan has already ceased including whale meat in school lunches and warns pregnant women about the hazards of eating whale.

Congress's positions must reflect the views and values of our country. We do not see whales as a source of food or a resource to be managed; we view them with respect and awe rather than with hunger. Their strength, intelligence, and beauty are far more valuable than their blubber. In an age where warming seas and pollution already threaten their existence, we should not contribute to their decline by hunting them with exploding harpoons.

The world looks to the United States for leadership and we must rise to this occasion and meet our responsibilities. By opposing any new forms of whaling and working to end so called ''scientific whaling,'' we can protect an integral part of the ocean's ecosystem. I urge my colleagues to live up to this responsibility by supporting H. Con. Res. 350.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 350, a resolution I introduced with the gentlelady from Guam, Ms. BORDALLO, and the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. DELAHUNT, urging the U.S. delegation attending the International Whaling Commission meeting in Santiago, Chile, to take a leadership role in ensuring the protection of the world's great whales. I wish to thank Chairman BERMAN and Subcommittee Chairman DELAHUNT for their support of my resolution and for ensuring its timely consideration today.

The American people care deeply about protecting whales, and the U.S. played a leading role in the adoption of the 1986 moratorium on commercial whaling by the IWC.

Before the moratorium, whalers from many countries routinely exceeded quotas established by the IWC, and whale populations plummeted. Adoption of the moratorium and the end of the slaughter represented an historic milestone in the history of whale conservation, and many stocks have recovered.

Despite this, whales still face many threats—from pollution, climate change, and even continued hunting. Norway officially objected to the moratorium when it was adopted and resumed commercial whaling in 1993. Japan and Iceland exploit loopholes in the Convention and continue to hunt whales under the guise of ''scientific whaling,'' despite the fact that the scientific committee of the IWC has decried the need for and condemned the quality of this science.

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, threatening to leave the IWC and resume larger-scale whaling operations unless their request is met.

The issues of commercial whaling under the guise of scientific or community whaling will likely be debated at this year's IWC meeting, and many will claim that the future of the organization is in jeopardy. We must be very careful, however, that our efforts to fix what some people perceive as a broken institution, do not come at the expense of the very species that institution is intended to protect.

H. Con. Res. 350 calls on the U.S. delegation to remain firmly opposed to commercial whaling in all its forms at the upcoming meeting of the IWC. The resolution urges the U.S. not only to oppose the unnecessary lethal taking of whales for scientific purposes, but also to reject proposals that would weaken or lift the moratorium by creating the new category of coastal or community whaling that is nothing more than commercial whaling in disguise.

Now, it is more critical than ever that the U.S. maintain its leadership role in shaping global whale conservation policies through the IWC. The American people strongly oppose commercial whaling of any kind, and the Administration must not undo more than 20 years of whale conservation by yielding to a few nations who threaten to leave the IWC.

In supporting this resolution, Congress recognizes the intrinsic value of these majestic animals, as well as the vital role whales play in the world's marine ecosystems. Conserving them for future generations requires us to uphold strong international agreements and maintain an unwavering commitment to protect these magnificent species from killing for commercial gain.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Having no additional speakers, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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 Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res 350.

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. YOUNG of Alaska. 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.

PUBLIC HOUSING DISASTER RELIEF ACT OF 2008

Mr. CAZAYOUX. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 6276) to repeal section 9(k) of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6276

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 ''Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008''.

SEC. 2. REPEAL.

Section 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437g) is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (k); and

(2) by redesignating subsections (l), (m), and (n) as subsections (k), (l), and (m), respectively.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAZAYOUX) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CAZAYOUX. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6276, the Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008. I am proud to stand here with my colleague, Congressman CHILDERS, in bringing this legislation to the floor.

This legislation is the product of a joint subcommittee hearing with the Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity and the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response.

The purpose of the hearing was to examine the roles and responsibilities of both HUD and FEMA in responding to the affordable housing needs of the gulf coast following emergencies and natural disasters.

Nearly 3 years after Katrina and Rita, we are still struggling with how to better streamline the process of delivering relief through our administrative agencies. This burden is very well known to members of my delegation, Congressmen MELANCON, JEFFERSON, BOUSTANY, and SCALISE, whose districts were directly impacted by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The testimony at the hearing revealed that the Office of Capital Improvements within HUD, which awards capital funds to public housing authorities to maintain and repair public housing stock, also administers the public housing emergency and natural disaster grant program.

The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act included a provision, provision 9(k), which permits HUD to award natural disaster grants to housing authorities. However, since 2000, Congress has prohibited HUD from using appropriated amounts under section 9(k) and provided a separate appropriation for emergencies and natural disasters. However, since its inception, this fund has diminished every year.

In 2005, the year that Katrina and Rita struck the gulf coast, the funds appropriated for this purpose was $29 million. According to HUD, this funding was quickly consumed in New Orleans and Biloxi.

The current funding level for 2008 is $18.5 million, which is woefully inadequate for any disaster, especially ones on the scale of Katrina and Rita. HUD has not asked for funding for this purpose in 2009. In fact, HUD's proposed budget for fiscal years 2008 and 2009 request no funding for disaster relief.

Normally, public housing authorities' losses in natural disasters are mitigated through insurance. But the magnitude of the damage caused by these hurricanes was more than preexisting insurance could handle. When the PHAs that faced these shortfalls sought public assistance funding through FEMA pursuant to section 405 of the Stafford Act, they got caught in a bureaucratic mess.

Despite a memorandum of agreement between HUD and FEMA in 2007 that would have made it possible for PHAs to apply for FEMA assistance as a last resort when insurance proceeds and disaster grants from HUD were inadequate, because section 9(k) exists, FEMA funding is not available because FEMA states that it violates congressional appropriations law.

The administration has called for the elimination of section 9(k) and the set aside disaster grants to eliminate this confusion and to make it possible for housing authorities to have access to section 406 of the Stafford Act through FEMA.

I agree with that assessment, and it is my belief that repealing this section will cut some of the bureaucratic mess that has prevented public housing authorities from doing the work of reconstruction in the aftermath of Katrina and Rita.

We see today the importance of this legislation as our hearts go out to the people of Iowa, Illinois and Missouri who struggle against the flood waters that continue to threaten and wreak devastation on their homes and on their communities.

While we are still learning the extent of the damage caused by the flooding in Iowa, and the anticipated flooding in Illinois and Missouri, we do know that this legislation will help them when it is time to rebuild. When this change is enacted into law, funds will become

immediately available for public housing authorities struggling to rebuild affordable housing for Americans devastated by natural disasters whether in the gulf coast or in the heartland.

We in Congress should always work to streamline government so that assistance gets to you where it is needed most as quickly as possible.

I would like to thank Chairmen FRANK and THOMPSON and subcommittee Chairs WATERS and CUELLAR for bringing this issue to light. I would also like to thank Ranking Member CAPITO for her support of this important legislation. In the nearly 3 years since hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the gulf coast, they have worked tirelessly to help our residents get the assistance they need. The entire gulf coast is thankful for their diligence on these matters.

I hope that my colleagues join me in passing this bill today so we can eliminate one more bureaucratic hurdle that hampers the efforts of our citizens to rebuild in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve my time, and I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. CHILDERS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6276, the Public Housing Disaster Relief Act. This legislation will repeal section 9(k) in the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act, and clears the way for public housing authorities in need of repair following a disaster to be eligible for FEMA section 406 funds under the Stafford Act.

Today, there are two programs that are designed to assist public facilities and private nonprofit facilities in times of disasters. Section 9(k) within HUD was set up to provide natural disaster grants to public housing authorities. Section 406 of the Stafford Act permits the use of FEMA funds for repair, restoration, reconstruction, or replacement of public facilities and private nonprofit facilities, as well as associated expenses.

Since the 2000 appropriations, Congress has repealed section 9(k) and separately appropriated a set-aside amount within the Public Housing Capital Fund for emergencies and natural disasters. Congress has reduced this fund over the past 8 years. The funding has gone from a high of $75 million from 2000 through 2002 to a low of $16.8 million last year.

In 2004, four hurricanes struck Florida, completely depleting the $39.7 million available in funding for that year. In 2005, hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit the gulf coast, and that year's funding of $29.8 million was not adequate to restore public housing that was damaged or destroyed.

□ 1445

In 2006, Hurricane Wilma came ashore in Florida during the first month of the fiscal year, using much of the $16.8 million funding for 2006.

Despite the lack of funding available under the section 9(k) emergency reserve account, public housing developments have remained ineligible for FEMA funds under section 406.

While current law is intended to prevent duplication by both HUD and FEMA for public housing facilities, it has put public housing facilities at a distinct disadvantage relative to other types of housing in disaster areas.

In testimony before a joint subcommittee hearing on June 4, 2008, with the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity and the Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response Subcommittee of the Homeland Security Committee, HUD testified that it did not believe that Congress intended to limit the ability of public housing authorities to access Stafford Act funding by providing funding under section 9(k).

Specifically, HUD's testimony, stated this: ''In recent years the President has proposed eliminating both the portion of section 9(k) that provides the disaster grant funding and the set-aside for disaster grants in an attempt to alleviate the confusion about disaster assistance and make it possible for housing authorities to have access to section 406 Stafford Act funding.''

HUD went on to suggest several ways to resolve this current situation: ''One potential solution to disaster funding shortfalls for public housing authorities would be the permanent repeal or amendment of section 9(k).''

H.R. 6276, the Public Housing Disaster Relief Act, clearly paves the way for public housing authorities in need of repair following a disaster to be eligible for FEMA section 406 funds under the Stafford Act.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6276, the Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008. I'm honored to join my colleagues in supporting this bill, specifically Chairman FRANK and Congressman CAZAYOUX from Louisiana, Mrs. CAPITO from West Virginia and Mr. NEUGEBAUER from Texas.

The Public Housing Disaster Relief Act is a commonsense approach to reducing ambiguity between the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Federal Emergency Management Agency by striking section 9(k) of the United States Housing Act which was implemented in 1998.

While certainly well-intended to encourage the Department of Housing and Urban Development to set aside funds in the event of a natural disaster, section 9(k) has proven to become an overburdensome authorization that has stalled Federal dollars from being disbursed to public housing authorities following a presidentially-declared natural disaster.

Since 2000, the Appropriations Committee has allocated zero dollars toward section 9(k), and, instead, separately appropriated a specified amount within HUD's capital fund to be used for emergencies and natural disasters.

We are all reminded of the devastating impact Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had on the gulf coast in 2005, specifically, in the Fourth Congressional District of Mississippi, represented by my friend and colleague, Congressman GENE TAYLOR.

I would also like to acknowledge Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON for his hard work in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

To date, the confusion associated with section 9(k) of the Housing Act has blocked FEMA from disbursing any Federal disaster related funds to multiple public housing authorities in Mississippi due to an internal government disagreement on whether HUD or FEMA is responsible for providing natural disaster relief to public housing authorities across the gulf coast.

The State of Mississippi was forced to allocate $100 million of its Federal Community Development Block Grant allocation to rebuild various public housing units, and the State is still in the process of receiving final approval to actually use the Federal grant dollars which were approved almost 2 years ago.

Recently, the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development held a hearing in conjunction with the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response on this matter where Jeffrey Riddel, Director of the Office of Capital Improvements, Public and Indian Housing at HUD noted, ''One potential approach to disaster funding shortfalls for public housing authorities would be the permanent repeal or amendment of section 9(k).''

The physical revitalization of communities following a natural disaster is critical to strengthening economic development. As a local county official for over 16 years prior to coming to Congress, I have witnessed the benefits and resources local public housing authorities offer to communities across the United States, even communities that are routinely impacted by natural disasters.

I believe that H.R. 6276 removes unnecessary bureaucratic red tape between HUD and FEMA in order to provide tangible Federal support dollars for rebuilding affordable housing to communities struck by overwhelming natural disasters.

Additionally, I would note the Congressional Budget Office has scored this legislation as budget neutral over 5 years.

In conclusion, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6276.

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, we're today talking about making sure that, in the event of a disaster, that we have the funds and we don't have to go through a lot of red tape to make sure that we can restore this housing, when it's repairable, in a feasible way, and to make sure that we continue to provide the shelter for some of our very needy Americans.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there aren't bills on the floor today. There should be bills on the floor, and there should be a bipartisan bill that works on another disaster that is impacting a lot of needy Americans today, and that's the fact of the rising electric costs, utility costs for many of the people that live in these housing authorities. The mass transit that they use to go to and fro work is going up. They're having to raise their fares. Even gasoline for them to go to their work and back.

And so, Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan bill which certainly we support, I support. I would hope that we would bring some other bipartisan bills to the floor that would address probably one of the most looming disasters for many of these families, as well as families all across the country.

I get to thinking about the fact that today America had to write a check for about a billion dollars to provide energy supplement for the energy that we already produce in this country. I think about the fact that $170 million of that went to Hugo Chavez. I think about what we could do together if we were to begin to have an energy policy in this country today where we were investing $170 million in America every day rather than investing $170 million in a dictator from Venezuela, that we can create jobs, and that maybe many of the folks that are in the housing authorities around America today, with those jobs, that they could move into conventional for-rental housing, or even experience the American dream of owning their own home.

So while I support this bill, I would hope that we could take this same bipartisan spirit, working in the future, to solve America's energy needs instead of solving the financial needs of many folks or countries around the world that don't really care whether our folks in public housing have a nice, clean, safe place to live or not.

But we care, and we need to show the American people that we care about them, not just the people that are in public housing, but the families all across America today that are struggling with double the price of a tank of gasoline.

Just the other night I was on the phone with some constituents back in Texas, and this gentleman was on the phone. He said, ''Congressman, I have to go get dialysis three times a week. I have to drive over 100 miles to do that. And now I'm down to making a decision whether I'm going to be able to afford gasoline, groceries, or the rent.''

That's not a decision we want people in America making. And so certainly, in the future, I hope that we will be able to not only address some of these important housing issues, as we've done in the Financial Services Committee, but I hope, also, that we would remember that part of the American dream is also having the ability to have a nice place to live, but also to be able to have an economy where we can grow and prosper and make, hopefully, some of our subsidized housing a temporary spot for American people and not a permanent spot. But with these rising costs of utilities and gasoline, I'm afraid we may be locking them into a scenario from which they would like to get out.

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

Mr. CHILDERS. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, I guess as I get older my memory is even worse than I thought. I thought I remembered what it was like when the Republicans were in power. But I don't seem to remember any of those bills my friend from Texas was just talking about. Apparently they were saving them up until we came to power, because I don't remember them ever bringing them up when we were here.

Having said that, I do want to apologize to my friends on the other side for talking about the legislation under consideration. I hope they will indulge me as I do that.

And as I do it, I want to say that I think what we've seen in the bill being brought forward by our newest colleagues from Louisiana and Mississippi is the importance of timing. We've had this problem in which public housing authorities in Louisiana and Mississippi were being treated unfairly. This is not singling them out for special treatment. This is ending a bureaucratic glitch that disadvantaged them. And we're doing it in the way that was suggested by the Bush administration, and I give them credit for that.

But it ought to be clear to people that having new Members here from Louisiana and Mississippi, the areas affected, had an impact. They are both on the Financial Services Committee, and I'm very proud that the Financial Services Committee on which they are now members gave them the opportunity to bring this bill forward.

I also want to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Mississippi and the gentleman from Texas, the Chair and Subcommittee Chair of the Homeland Security Committee.

One of the things that plagues this institution is jurisdictional arguments and turf fights. I'm very pleased that we've been able, my colleagues particularly on the Homeland Security Committee, to work so closely together on this. I'm also glad to say that this is genuinely a bipartisan issue, and I appreciate the Republicans supporting us.

But I do want to stress again, this is no special deal for Louisiana and Mississippi. By a bureaucratic glitch, the existence of a provision that has never been funded keeps them from getting money to replace public housing that was destroyed. And there's a Federal program under FEMA that provides Federal funds for public buildings that are destroyed. This simply allows public housing a fair share.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise also to salute the two newest members of this committee for introducing this legislation.

This legislation, the Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008, will strike section 9(k) of the U.S. Housing Act and clarify the funding structure of public housing authorities in the wake of disasters.

Just 2 weeks ago, the Financial Services Committee and Homeland Security Committee held a joint hearing to examine the housing conditions of individuals displaced by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. During this hearing, the testimony provided by the FEMA and HUD witnesses revealed that there is confusion between the two agencies over who is responsible for providing disaster recovery funds to public housing authorities that are damaged by disasters.

□ 1500

A number of public housing authorities received significant damage, Mr. Speaker, during Hurricane Katrina. But these housing authorities did not receive any funds from the 9(k) account because there simply were not any funds available.

Public housing authorities did receive some assistance from the Public Housing Capital Fund Emergency Needs Account, but the funds were quickly exhausted and left many housing authorities without the resources they needed to repair their units.

In total, Mr. Speaker, only $29 million was made available to the housing authorities along the gulf coast. If you are familiar with the degree of devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and Rita, you know this was not enough.

H.R. 6276 will eliminate an account that has historically been underused and clarify the funding structure by making it clear to FEMA that public housing authorities are eligible for Stafford Act assistance.

I urge the passage of this important legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CUELLAR) 3 minutes.

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Mr. CHILDERS. I also want to thank Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON of the Homeland Security Committee and Chairman BARNEY FRANK of the Financial Services Committee, as well as Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity and our ranking members, also, for working together on this piece of legislation.

I, too, congratulate our two newest Members of the House, Congressman CAZAYOUX from Louisiana and Congressman CHILDERS from my home State of Mississippi for drafting H.R. 6276.

As you know, earlier this month, Ms. WATERS and I teamed up to hold a hearing examining the roles and responsibilities of HUD and FEMA in providing affordable housing to disaster victims under the direction of Chairman FRANK and Chairman THOMPSON. During this hearing, there was confusion as to which agency is responsible for providing disaster recovery funds to public housing authorities damaged during disasters.

The Public Housing Disaster Relief Act of 2008 will strike section 9(k) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 clarifying the funding structure for public housing authorities in the wake of disasters. After Hurricane Katrina, housing authorities received no funds from the 9(k) account, and it's not hard to see that this account is no longer needed. In fact, this account only caused us confusion as to who is responsible for providing disaster recovery funds to public housing authorities. Let's do our part to eliminate this confusion.

This legislation, H.R. 6276, will eliminate the 9(k) account and clarify the funding structure by identifying FEMA as the responsible party for providing assistance to public housing authorities through the Stafford Act. We need to streamline government and provide services to our constituents in a more efficient and effective manner, and this is exactly what H.R. 6276 does.

So I encourage our Members, all of my colleagues, to support H.R. 6276.

Again, I congratulate both Mr. CAZAYOUX and Mr. CHILDERS for bringing up this good piece of legislation.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) 2 minutes.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, no place on the planet needs this more than my district in Louisiana. Before the storm, there were some 5,000 families in public housing representing some 30-or-so thousand people who were living there. Since the storm, there are some 800 people or so, well down from our prior number. That's because the storm damaged almost all the public housing virtually thoroughly to the point now that the areas where public housing used to occupy are laid as a wasteland, and we have had nothing but administrative fighting and confusion over this issue.

And what is happening here today that Chairman FRANK and our two newest colleagues, Mr. CAZAYOUX and Mr. CHILDERS, are bringing today is a bill that is very much needed.

In my area, the cost to rebuild public housing is going to be astronomical, but the families who are depending on it, it's quite a large number of people. And there is no way we can restore affordable housing in our area without restoring public housing. There is no way to restore public housing unless there is an agency that has a tradition of dealing with bringing public buildings back into place as FEMA does. It's an unusual argument for us to make that we want FEMA to do more in our area, to have more responsibility, given the record it has of being far less than perfect. But that is a case where it makes sense for FEMA to take over and fill the gap.

So I want to congratulate you again for coming forward. This legislation is going to mean a lot to our people in Louisiana, a lot to the folks I represent in New Orleans, and a lot to the families who are struggling to get back into their homes.

So thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I was going to inquire to see if the gentleman has other speakers.

Mr. CHILDERS. I actually have one more speaker.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time, 2½ minutes, to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, Members, I would like to commend all of our authors and co-authors on this legislation. We learned a lot because of Hurricane Katrina. We learned that FEMA and HUD are confused. They don't work together. As a matter of fact, they work against each other. And the most vulnerable of those who were victimized by Hurricane Katrina, the public housing residents, were so negatively impacted by all of this.

We found that when there was a subcommittee hearing that we held, this joint hearing with Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency, Communications, Preparedness, and Response, we talked about the roles of HUD and FEMA in responding to affordable housing needs following natural disasters and emergencies. At that hearing, we learned that HUD Section 9 program, the public housing reconstruction, has never been funded because of language in appropriations acts that has barred the program from receiving any appropriations. Although HUD has been providing a limited amount of funds from its already underfunded capital fund this year, the department proposes not to provide any emergency capital funds.

In addition, because section 9(k) is authorized, FEMA has refused to allow PHAs to access funds under its section 406 reconstruction program. This is in spite of the fact that there is no statutory or other prohibition on PHAs using these funds. FEMA is simply refusing to grant PHAs access to section 406 funding because it says that PHAs have another source for this purpose, section 9(k), which has never been funded.

You've heard a lot from Members here today about this, and I'm going to yield back my time so that the gentleman can do a close appropriate to this legislation that he so courageously authored.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. CHILDERS).

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I would like to say I think this does go a long way to probably eliminate some confusion between these two agencies. It makes sense to do this.

I want to welcome the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAZAYOUX) to the committee and thank him for his willingness to participate in this issue.

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

Mr. CHILDERS. Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to thank those who spoke on behalf of this today. And in conclusion, I simply, again, urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6276.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAZAYOUX) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6276.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMERICAN VETERANS DISABLED FOR LIFE COMMEMORATIVE COIN ACT

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill (H.R. 634) to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who became disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the Senate amendment is as follows:

Senate amendment:

On page 3, strike line 24 and all that follows thru page 4 line 3 and insert:

(1) DESIGN.—The design of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the service of our disabled veterans who, having survived the ordeal of war, made enormous personal sacrifices defending the principles of our democracy.

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

Kansas (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MOORE from Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation that we consider today is a simple, straightforward bill that would take one small but important step to honor more than 3 million American veterans currently living with disabilities as a result of their service in the United States Armed Forces. In fact, out of 26 million American veterans living today, nearly 1 in 10 lives with the physical cost of their service to our country in the form of some sort of permanent disability.

While there are many constructive steps that Congress should take to improve the lives of disabled veterans, by passing this bipartisan legislation today, which I introduced with my friend and colleague, Mr. KIRK, we hope to honor their sacrifice and the toll this has taken on their lives.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides for the design, manufacturer, and sale of special $1 commemorative silver coins and authorizes special surcharges on these coins to be contributed toward the construction of a memorial to disabled veterans in our country. The American Veterans Disabled for Life will command an impressive two-acre site located just southwest of the Rayburn House Office Building adjacent to the National Mall in full view of the United States Capitol.

The memorial will symbolize America's lasting gratitude for the men and women whose lives are forever changed by their service to our country. It will also serve as a continual reminder to Members of Congress about the human cost of warfare and the need to support our American war veterans.

The House approved this legislation unanimously in May of 2007 by a vote of 416–0. The Senate recently followed suit by approving the legislation by unanimous consent with one small amendment giving the Secretary of the Treasury more discretion over the design of the coin.

I once again urge my colleagues to adopt this important legislation, Mr. Speaker. We will never forget the sacrifice that our American heroes made and continue to make in order to promote a better world for their fellow citizens. Building this long-overdue memorial is something we need to do as Americans.

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

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

I rise in strong support of this legislation of this bill sponsored by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) which honors those who have sacrificed so much so that we may live in peace, and this is long overdue that we build a memorial for them.

This legislation, as the gentleman mentioned, passed in the House on April 15 of last year by a margin of 416–0 and comes back to us from the other body with that minor amendment describing the coin's design that is totally acceptable, and I urge immediate passage.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, if I could just add one thing.

I want to thank Mr. NEUGEBAUER and Mr. KIRK, who really drafted this bill and got me involved with this, for their generous work on this legislation.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), one of the co-authors of this bill and someone I have a great deal of respect and I know has worked tirelessly for the great men and women who have served in the past and are currently serving in our country such time as he may consume.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, as the co-author of this legislation, the American Veterans Disabled For Life Commemorative Coin Act, I want to especially thank my partner, DENNIS MOORE of Kansas, for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor, where we are now, on to the White House for enactment.

Our legislation seeks to recognize the sacrifices made by more than 3 million living disabled veterans by building a memorial for them right here within sight of the Capitol.

In 2000, Congress authorized the construction of this memorial just southwest of the Rayburn building. In December 2006, the President signed a law that transferred control of the land for the memorial from the District of Columbia to the National Park Service. In February 2007, I joined my colleague from Illinois (Mr. HARE) in introducing a bill that extended the authorization for this memorial through 2015, and that was signed into law in October.

□ 1515

Now, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation needs to raise approximately $65 million for the construction of this memorial.

Our legislation today will authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative silver dollars that will be sold with a surcharge to help the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial Foundation to raise the money it will need to construct this memorial to our heroes. Not only will these coins be collector's items, but they will help raise millions for the memorial.

In crafting the bill, Congressman MOORE and I had the privilege to meet an extraordinary young man, Sergeant Bryan Anderson from Rolling Meadows, Illinois. Bryan's story is, unfortunately, all too common for many veterans from Iraq, but his spirit is very uncommon, and his attitude sets him completely apart from the average person.

You see, Bryan at the age of 26, who finished basic training on September 12, 2001, lost both his legs and an arm to a roadside bomb in Iraq. Bryan jokes that he would have lost both his arms if he hadn't been smoking when the bomb detonated. His constant sense of humor and his determination are clearly apparent and came through loud and clear in a long interview he gave to Esquire magazine.

In it, Bryan said, ''This doesn't define me. It may be how I look on the outside, but it's not who I am. I guess you could remember me easily as being a triple amputee, but it's not who I am, has nothing to do with who I am. I've always been the same person.''

Bryan is a self-described ''adrenaline junkie,'' who hopes to become a Hollywood stuntman. Since his appearance on the cover of Esquire, he's had numerous opportunities to use his story for some sort of political gain, but he has always forgiven that opportunity. For Bryan, he doesn't like to talk about politics, but always wants to talk and support the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial.

Washington has many advocates for many causes here in this town but none more effective than Bryan Anderson. With Bryan, you see what you get. He is a veteran with an inspirational story, who wants to see this memorial built, not just for himself but for all of his disabled veterans from World War II, from Korea, from Vietnam, from Desert Storm, and from his conflicts both in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Bryan is about as genuine as you can ever get, and with passage of this legislation, we come closer to the day when Bryan will return to Capitol Hill to visit the memorial that he helped to build.

I want to thank my friend Dennis and also a member of my staff, Patrick Magnuson, for helping shepherd this legislation through the House.

With more than 3 million disabled American veterans alive today, it is fitting that we now take the time to build a memorial in memorializing their sacrifice here within sight of the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

As someone who is one of the only Members of Congress still serving in the military as a Naval Reserve intelligence officer, it's my honor to be the lead Republican cosponsor of this legislation. It's our hope now that we go to the White House, enact this legislation, mint this coin, raise millions for our fellow disabled American veterans, and then build this memorial, not just to show all of the veterans how much we care about them and honor them but

also to remind future Congresses that freedom is not free, that a price is very high when the President calls on our Armed Forces to deliver, and when they do, we honor them and will always remember their memory.

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I just want to again thank Mr. KIRK and Mr. NEUGEBAUER for their very, very hard work and important work on this legislation and colleagues on both sides of the aisle who came together in a bipartisan spirit to pass this.

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

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 634.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FOOD, CONSERVATION, AND ENERGY ACT OF 2008—VETO MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110–125)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following veto message from the President of the United States:

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 6124, the ''Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.''

The bill that I vetoed on May 21, 2008, H.R. 2419, which became Public Law 110–234, did not include the title III provisions that are in this bill. In passing H.R. 6124, the Congress had an opportunity to improve on H.R. 2419 by modifying certain objectionable, onerous, and fiscally imprudent provisions. Unfortunately, the Congress chose to send me the same unacceptable farm bill provisions in H.R. 6124, merely adding title III. I am returning this bill for the same reasons as stated in my veto message of May 21, 2008, on H.R. 2419.

For a year and a half, I have consistently asked that the Congress pass a good farm bill that I can sign. Regrettably, the Congress has failed to do so. At a time of high food prices and record farm income, this bill lacks program reform and fiscal discipline. It continues subsidies for the wealthy and increases farm bill spending by more than $20 billion, while using budget gimmicks to hide much of the increase. It is inconsistent with our objectives in international trade negotiations, which include securing greater market access for American farmers and ranchers. It would needlessly expand the size and scope of government. Americans sent us to Washington to achieve results and be good stewards of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars. This bill violates that fundamental commitment.

In January 2007, my Administration put forward a fiscally responsible farm bill proposal that would improve the safety net for farmers and move current programs toward more market-oriented policies. The bill before me today fails to achieve these important goals.

At a time when net farm income is projected to increase by more than $28 billion in 1 year, the American taxpayer should not be forced to subsidize that group of farmers who have adjusted gross incomes of up to $1.5 million. When commodity prices are at record highs, it is irresponsible to increase government subsidy rates for 15 crops, subsidize additional crops, and provide payments that further distort markets. Instead of better targeting farm programs, this bill eliminates the existing payment limit on marketing loan subsidies.

Now is also not the time to create a new uncapped revenue guarantee that could cost billions of dollars more than advertised. This is on top of a farm bill that is anticipated to cost more than $600 billion over 10 years. In addition, this bill would force many businesses to prepay their taxes in order to finance the additional spending.

This legislation is also filled with earmarks and other ill-considered provisions. Most notably, H.R. 6124 provides: $175 million to address water issues for desert lakes; $250 million for a 400,000-acre land purchase from a private owner; funding and authority for the noncompetitive sale of National Forest land to a ski resort; and $382 million earmarked for a specific watershed. These earmarks, and the expansion of Davis-Bacon Act prevailing wage requirements, have no place in the farm bill. Rural and urban Americans alike are frustrated with excessive government spending and the funneling of taxpayer funds for pet projects. This bill will only add to that frustration.

The bill also contains a wide range of other objectionable provisions, including one that restricts our ability to redirect food aid dollars for emergency use at a time of great need globally. The bill does not include the requested authority to buy food in the developing world to save lives. Additionally, provisions in the bill raise serious constitutional concerns. For all the reasons outlined above, I must veto H.R. 6124.

I veto this bill fully aware that it is rare for a stand-alone farm bill not to receive the President's signature, but my action today is not without precedent. In 1956, President Eisenhower stood firmly on principle, citing high crop subsidies and too much government control of farm programs among the reasons for his veto. President Eisenhower wrote in his veto message, ''Bad as some provisions of this bill are, I would have signed it if in total it could be interpreted as sound and good for farmers and the nation.'' For similar reasons, I am vetoing the bill before me today.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 18, 2008*.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The objections of the President will be spread at large upon the Journal, and the veto message and the bill will be printed as a House document.

The question is, Will the House, on reconsideration, pass the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE).

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

I'm not going to take a lot of time because I think people have heard enough about this issue, and we apologize. I guess we have to be in this position, but what we're doing here today is overriding the veto hopefully for the final time on the farm bill because of the enrolling error that was made on the initial override or veto that happened a few weeks ago.

At the time, we made a decision to move ahead. Even though the wrong bill was vetoed, we moved ahead to override that veto, which we prevailed on the floor here by a substantial margin. I think in retrospect that was a good idea because 14 titles of the farm bill have been law since then.

We had a meeting this morning with the Secretary to talk about implementation. So the work has been going on within the department to get ready for implementation. We have gained a couple or 3 weeks in that process. Just a couple of days ago, the administration Secretary put out the loan rates and target prices for this crop year. So that process is moving along.

What this bill does, the 14 titles are now law. The trade title was left out. What this bill does is reenact the entire 15 titles as they were passed by the original conference report and does it all as one complete whole. And in the bill, what it does, it vitiates the 14 titles that have been law for the last 3 weeks I guess, or so.

It cleans up the technical problem that we had created by the enrolling office and puts into law what was intended by the conference committee.

This is a good bill. It has wide support in the Congress, as we have seen by the number of votes that we've had here on the floor. It is not perfect, but it does address all of the issues that have been brought to the Agriculture Committee by the various different groups that have been interested in this piece of legislation, and I encourage my colleagues to override the veto.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of overriding the farm bill veto. Currently, 14 of the farm bill's 15 titles have been enacted into law, and the passage of the veto override will ensure that the whole bill, including the trade title, becomes law.

□ 1530

The content of the bill before us today is the exact same as it was when

317 of my colleagues joined me in May in support of the reform-minded farm bill the House and Senate Conference Committee produced. The only things that have changed are the bill number and the title, all else remains the same.

This farm bill has enjoyed significant bipartisan support in both Chambers. This bill was a collaborative effort crafted by Members on both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol and is historic in the amount and degree of reform that it contains.

We brought this bill a long way with a long list of reforms that lower cost to the taxpayer and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs, yet retains the fundamental purpose for having farm programs to begin with, guaranteeing a stable, reliable, and affordable food supply for the American consumer.

Unlike the last farm bill, which was signed into law by the President of the United States, this farm bill is less expensive and contains many of the reforms that the President requested. So I urge my colleagues to support the farm bill override and ensure that the very same farm bill that has garnered significant bipartisan support in this Congress already can finally become law in its entirety.

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

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I would just take one additional small amount of time to thank my colleague and friend, Mr. GOODLATTE, for the work that he did with me on this bill. As he said, this has been a bipartisan effort; had it not been, we wouldn't be here today. So I very much want to thank him and the other Members on his side of the aisle as well as the Members on our side of the aisle for all their hard work through this process.

And also, I want to mention our staff, both my staff and the minority staff. The amount of time that they put into this bill has been extraordinary, the patience that they showed, having to sit in meetings and not make much progress for a lot of time is what you really want to see in public service. Our staff went above and beyond the call of duty.

So, again, I thank all of my colleagues and urge my colleagues to vote to override the President's veto.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself a moment to say to the chairman of the committee that I also appreciate the very hard work that he put into this very bipartisan effort. And I want to thank the staff on both sides of the aisle.

I do believe that this farm bill contains far more reform than any previous farm bill. And I think the track record in the future in preserving good farm policy to assure the American people, our taxpayers, our consumers of the opportunity to have a safe and abundant and affordable food supply is very, very important. And so I thank the chairman for his hard work for all this time. The two-and-a-half-year process it has taken has finally come to a conclusion. I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation.

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

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to reclaim my time.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. One minute is hardly time to speak against this bill.

Let me just read a statement that was made by the majority leader a couple of days ago. He commented on the budget that was being passed at the time. He said, ''There is only one person in the United States of America that can stop spending in its tracks, the only person.'' He was referring to the President of the United States and putting a lot of blame, if you will, on the President for not stopping spending that I had argued was going on.

Here we have the President standing up and saying, this bill is bloated; this bill is far too big; it spends far too much. Yet the same people who were blaming the President for not standing up to spending are voting now to override the President when he says enough is enough. This is wrong. We ought to stand up—as Republicans at least, if not the Democrats as well—to stand up and say enough is enough. This bill spends too much, far, far too much.

This bill lacks real reform, overspends, hides its real costs with gimmicks, jeopardizes trade negotiations, increases size and scope of government, and is disservice to taxpayers.

It contains more than $5 billion a year in handouts to millionaire farmers and landowners.

It includes the Average Crop Revenue Election program in the conference report, a program that appears to serve the purpose of ensuring commodity farmers get federal handouts even though crop prices are soaring. The details of the potential liability to taxpayers only came out after passage.

Under the supposed salary cap, married farmers could still be making up to $2.5 billion and receive direct payments.

It weakened the payment limit for farm subsidies—lifting the limit on marketing loan benefits and increasing the limit on direct payment benefits.

The gaming of the price support program allows farmers to lock in their loan rate when prices are lowest and sell when prices are highest.

The bill adds target prices for additional crops and increases loan rates and target prices for others.

The brand new and permanent disaster title costs $3.8 billion.

Unfortunately, it includes the extension of marginally reduced ethanol production tax credits and the import tariff—thus continuing the failed federal ethanol program that is responsible at least in part for high food prices plaguing consumers.

The bill includes hundreds of millions of dollars in loan guarantees for the construction of advanced biofuels plants and a Biomass Crop Assistance Program to provide incentives to cellulosic ethanol crops.

This bill forces USDA to sell excess sugar into ethanol production, even though sugar users would continue paying artificially inflated prices ($4 billion or more). (USDA has estimated that ethanol from sugar is twice as expensive to produce [as opposed to corn-based ethanol].)

The bill included disclosed earmarks, plus an undisclosed and airdropped earmark that provides $170 million for commercial and recreational "members of the fishing communities" affected by missing salmon, and the "forestry conservation tax credit bond" to benefit the Plum Creek timber company.

This bill represents the worst of legislative process: pandering to special interests, dark of night negotiations, airdropped earmarks worth millions of taxpayer dollars, opposition shut out of the floor process, and a $300 billion boondoggle bill.

The cost of the bill is not fully offset: OMB says as much as $20 billion in budget gimmicks and "illusionary" spending stops where funding for programs abruptly ends.

Conferees waived PAYGO, and went "baseline shopping" (did not use the most current baseline). I have said from the beginning: no way to do a Farm Bill without waiving the PAYGO rules. I was proven right.

The President has rightly vetoed this bill not once but twice. We need House Members to stand up for taxpayers.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate having expired, without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Will the House, on reconsideration, pass the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?

Under the Constitution, the vote must be by the yeas and nays.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 317, nays 109, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 417]

YEAS—317

Abercrombie	Boswell	Clarke
Ackerman	Boucher	Clay
Aderholt	Boustany	Cleaver
Akin	Boyd (FL)	Clyburn
Alexander	Boyda (KS)	Coble
Allen	Brady (PA)	Cohen
Altmire	Brady (TX)	Cole (OK)
Andrews	Braley (IA)	Conaway
Arcuri	Brown (SC)	Conyers
Baca	Brown, Corrine	Costa
Bachus	Brown-Waite, Ginny	Costello
Baird	Buchanan	Courtney
Baldwin	Butterfield	Cramer
Barrow	Buyer	Crowley
Bartlett (MD)	Camp (MI)	Cuellar
Becerra	Capito	Cummings
Berkley	Capps	Davis (AL)
Berry	Cardoza	Davis (CA)
Bilirakis	Carnahan	Davis (IL)
Bishop (GA)	Carney	Davis (KY)
Bishop (NY)	Carson	Davis, David
Blackburn	Carter	Davis, Lincoln
Blunt	Castor	DeFazio
Bonner	Cazayoux	DeGette
Bono Mack	Chandler	Delahunt
Boozman	Childers	DeLauro
Boren		Diaz-Balart, L.

Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Frank (MA)
Gallegly
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
King (IA)
Kingston
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (OH)
Wittman (VA)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—109

Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Berman
Biggert
Bilbray
Blumenauer
Boehner
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Calvert
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capuano
Castle
Chabot
Cooper
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Garrett (NJ)
Goode
Granger
Heller
Hensarling
Hobson
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
Keller
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Knollenberg
Lamborn
Lewis (CA)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Marchant
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCrery
McDermott
McHenry
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller, Gary
Mitchell
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Myrick
Nunes
Paul
Pence
Petri
Pitts
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Ramstad
Reichert
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Saxton
Scalise
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Stearns
Tancredo
Terry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Wamp
Waxman
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Bishop (UT)
Gilchrest
Harman
Hulshof
Meeks (NY)
Peterson (PA)
Rush
Stark

□ 1557

Mr. REICHERT changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. NEUGEBAUER changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the bill was passed, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will notify the Senate of the action of the House.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1257 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 6063.

□ 1558

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 6063) to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes, with Ms. CLARKE (Acting Chairman) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Thursday, June 12, 2008, amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 110–707 offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) had been disposed of.

Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments printed in House Report 110–707 on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 5 by Mr. LAMPSON of Texas.

Amendment No. 10 by Mr. HODES of New Hampshire.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for the second electronic vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. LAMPSON

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. LAMPSON:

In title XI, add at the end the following new section (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 1109. EXCEPTION TO ALTERNATIVE FUEL PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENT.

Section 526(a) of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17142(a)) does not prohibit NASA from entering into a contract to purchase a generally available fuel that is not an alternative or synthetic fuel or predominantly produced from a nonconventional petroleum source, if—

(1) the contract does not specifically require the contractor to provide an alternative or synthetic fuel or fuel from a nonconventional petroleum source;

(2) the purpose of the contract is not to obtain an alternative or synthetic fuel or fuel from a nonconventional petroleum source: and

(3) the contract does not provide incentives for a refinery upgrade or expansion to allow a refinery to use or increase its use of fuel from a nonconventional petroleum source.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 429, noes 1, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 418]

AYES—429

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Cazayoux
Chabot
Chandler
Childers
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel

English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fortuño
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
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
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Norton
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Scalise
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)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
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)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—1

Blumenauer

NOT VOTING—8

Faleomavaega
Gilchrest
Harman
Hulshof
Meeks (NY)
Peterson (PA)
Rush
Stark

□ 1616

Mr. BRADY of Texas changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 10 OFFERED BY MR. HODES

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 10 offered by Mr. HODES:

In title XI, add at the end the following new section (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 1109. CHRISTA MCAULIFFE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR FIELDS RELATED TO THE MISSION OF NASA.

The Administrator shall establish a scholarship program in honor of Christa McAuliffe, who died in the 1986 Challenger Space Shuttle Disaster. The scholarship fund would provide scholarships each year of $10,000 each to three women who are going to college to study in fields related to the mission of NASA, with the goal of seeking careers in space science, aeronautics, and other fields related to NASA.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 423, noes 3, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 419]

AYES—423

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Cazayoux
Chabot
Chandler
Childers
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fortuño
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
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
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Norton
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Scalise
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)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton

Tancredo	Upton	Welch (VT)
Tanner	Van Hollen	Weldon (FL)
Tauscher	Velázquez	Weller
Taylor	Visclosky	Westmoreland
Terry	Walberg	Wexler
Thompson (CA)	Walden (OR)	Whitfield (KY)
Thompson (MS)	Walsh (NY)	Wilson (NM)
Thornberry	Walz (MN)	Wilson (OH)
Tiahrt	Wamp	Wilson (SC)
Tiberi	Wasserman Schultz	Wittman (VA)
Tierney	Waters	Wolf
Towns	Watson	Woolsey
Tsongas	Watt	Wu
Turner	Waxman	Yarmuth
Udall (CO)	Weiner	Young (AK)
Udall (NM)		Young (FL)

NOES—3

Broun (GA)	Flake	Paul

NOT VOTING—12

Boehner	Harman	Peterson (PA)
Faleomavaega	Hulshof	Poe
Foster	Issa	Rush
Gilchrest	Meeks (NY)	Stark

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1625

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

(By unanimous consent, Mr. BOSWELL was allowed to speak out of order.)

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR IOWA FLOOD VICTIMS

Mr. BOSWELL. I think all of you have been watching the news the last few days out in the Midwest and Iowa. This is the Iowa delegation here, of course.

It's been tough, it's been really rugged, and I think you know that, because you've been watching the news. It's devastating to communities to see what's going on when you have a flood. I know last Saturday, for example, all of us have been in and out of the emergency operating centers, and I flew over the district, flew up to Vinton, Iowa, those of you know. I went close to Waterloo and then down to Belle Plaine, around up to Vinton and then down over Iowa City, Cedar Rapids. It was really tough.

When you see a little town where all you see is rooftops, you know that there is a lot of pain there, fields flooded and so on. We are just very appreciative that the people have really bonded together.

I will just say this, and I would guess every one of us could bear testimony. For example, I was talking to some of the folks in one of the emergency operations centers, and after he told me all the things that were going on there, losing their power plant, this, that and many things, I said, how are you feeling?

They said, you know, we're like family. It's bonded us together, and we're going to conquer this. We hope that we could, of course, have some help.

I was reminded of that just yesterday when I was here for a moment of personal privilege, or the 1-minute, as we call it, and was asked to give the Pledge, and so I did. Of course, the part of the pledge that says ''one Nation, under God, indivisible,'' and that word ''indivisible'' all of a sudden meant so much to me, because we are a great country, and we won't have to face this alone. We know that.

I wanted to appreciate that to all of you. All the damage to businesses and homes and everything else is tough, and that's all up and down the whole way from Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana or Illinois, Missouri, right on down the river. That whole area is under this. Businesses and homes can be rebuilt, but lives are lost and suffering takes place. Over 20 at this point that we know about.

If I could, Madam Chairman, I would like to ask us to take a moment of silence in memory of those that are suffering at this time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Members will rise and observe a moment of silence.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008.

The bill supports NASA's missions and goals in space with a $20 billion authorization that, in addition to funding such important programs as the Hubble Space Telescope and the International Space Station, will also enable NASA to inspire a new generation of Americans through its plans for additional manned space exploration.

The bill continues other important NASA programs including its climate research programs which help us understand how solar radiation and human activities are affecting the Earth's climate; the Space Shuttle mission to the International Space Station to deliver the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer (an instrument that measures cosmic rays and particulate matter in space); NASA's Science Directorate, which studies Earth and the solar system; and NASA's many inspirational educational programs.

The educational programs are of particular importance as current science and engineering workers across the country begin to retire. To help ensure that the U.S. continues to meet the growing demand for scientists, mathematicians and engineers, it is important that Congress supports programs that encourage more young people to pursue careers in the sciences.

I want to especially acknowledge one such program—the NASA Goddard High School Internship Program which has educated and inspired students across this country—including some from my district. The NASA Goddard High School Internship Program is a research intensive program allowing interns to apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics disciplines to ''real time'' research. The program enables students to work on projects relevant to NASA's goals and then share the results of their research with NASA management, personnel and fellow interns.

I commend NASA for the role it continues to play in helping maintain and strengthen the vitality of science and engineering in the United States and for its ongoing efforts to inspire, educate and engage our young people.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute, as amended, was agreed to.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Under the rule, the Committee rises.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEINER) having assumed the chair, Ms. CLARKE, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 6063) to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes, pursuant to House Resolution 1257, she reported the bill back to the House with an amendment adopted by the Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the previous question is ordered.

Is a separate vote demanded on any amendment to the amendment reported from the Committee of the Whole? If not, the question is on the amendment.

The amendment was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

□ 1630

MOTION TO RECOMMIT OFFERED BY MR. GINGREY

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman opposed to the bill?

Mr. GINGREY. I am in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Gingrey of Georgia moves to recommit the bill H.R. 6063 to the Committee on Science and Technology with instructions to report the same back to the House promptly in the form to which perfected at the time of this motion, with the following amendment:

In section 1106(a), insert '', and the United States,'' after ''can assist NASA''.

In section 1106(b)(1), amend the proposed subsection (b) to read as follows:

''(b) TOPICS.—(1) In selecting topics for prize competitions, the Administrator shall consult widely both within and outside the Federal Government, and may empanel advisory committees. The Administrator shall give consideration to prize goals such as the demonstration of the ability to provide energy to the lunar surface from space-based solar power systems, demonstration of innovative near-Earth object survey and deflection strategies, and innovative approaches to improving the safety and efficiency of aviation systems.

''(2) At least one of the prize competitions awarded under this section shall focus on lowering the cost of aviation fuel, and shall give consideration to technologies aimed at converting coal, oil shale, tar sands, and biomass to liquid fuel for aviation uses.''

In title XI, strike the section (added by the amendment offered by Mr. Lampson of Texas) regarding section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, and insert the following new section (and amend the table of contents accordingly):

SEC. 1109. FUEL USE.

The Administrator of NASA (or his designee) may waive the prohibition contained

in section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (P.L. 110–140) if such a waiver is deemed necessary by the Administrator, in his sole discretion, to further the mission and objectives of NASA.

Mr. GINGREY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motion be considered read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, there is no Federal agency that has risen to the challenge of innovation over the last 50 years like NASA. When the Soviets put a man into orbit, NASA put men on the moon. We, as a Nation, are today the fortunate heirs of NASA's legacy: conviction, resolve, and achievement. As a Congress, we owe it to NASA to create an environment that promotes creativity rather than one that prevents innovation.

Unfortunately, I deeply regret this House has not fully empowered the men and women of NASA to meet the challenges of our Nation in the 21st century. Instead of providing it the tools needed to thrive in energy innovation, the Democratic majority chose to handcuff NASA when it enacted section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

Section 526 placed an artificial limitation on the ability of Federal agencies, including NASA, to utilize alternative fuel sources for their energy needs; even if they could be safely developed within the United States. These domestic energy sources would reduce the cost of fuel and save the American taxpayers billions of dollars.

While families across the Nation pay higher and higher prices for their own fuel needs at the pump, section 526 ensures that they will also bear the full cost of the Federal Government's fuel needs, no matter how high they may go. That, Mr. Speaker, is an inconvenient truth that even politicians turned documentary filmmakers can understand.

This motion to recommit will provide a waiver for NASA from this misguided provision. It will also foster the American innovative and competitive spirit by putting in place prizes for the private sector to work with domestic sources of energy that are readily available—coal, oil shale, tar sands, and biomass—to develop liquid fuels that will reduce costs.

Mr. Speaker, today nearly a year and a half after Speaker PELOSI promised the American people a ''common-sense plan'' to bring down gas prices, the price of a gallon of gasoline is $4.08. This marks an increase of $1.75 since the beginning of the 110th Congress, a nearly 75 percent increase since the Democrats took control. Indeed, a Pelosi premium that is wrecking this economy.

Since we are the people's House, one might presume that the Democrats would listen to the American people. However, the 20 percent of Americans who favor suing our way to lower gas prices have trumped the nearly 60 percent of Americans who favor domestic drilling. Perhaps this is motivated out of a deference to the trial lawyers and environmental extremist groups who are, shall we say, ''closely tied to the Democratic Caucus.''

Mr. Speaker, this same establishment is preventing us today from extracting oil shale in the western United States in which an estimated 1.2 trillion barrels of petroleum is trapped in porous shale rock, of which 70 percent is on public Federal land. That is exactly where it is going to stay, trapped as long as section 526 remains intact.

Whatever action this Congress does take, a repeal of section 526 is in order—or at the very least a waiver, grant a waiver as this motion to recommit proposes—so we do not hinder progress at the very agency that has been on the cutting edge of technology for these last 50 years. But time after time, in the committee rooms of the House, in the Rules Committee and on the floor of this body, my Democratic colleagues have refused to address section 526 in any meaningful way.

And let me point out, Mr. Speaker, the Lampson amendment does virtually nothing. It only allows us to continue importing oil from Canada, our largest source of imported oil because it might contain just a little trace of petroleum that was obtained from tar sands. That's all that does.

If this Congress insists on sacrificing American competitiveness and innovation on the altar of environmental extremism, then it will be one small step for NASA, but one giant leap for Greenpeace.

Mr. Speaker, this is about more than the pain at the pump. It is also about the spirit of discovery and innovation that is the backbone of our great Nation. The decisions we make today will not only impact this generation, but generations to come. We can either provide American engineers and innovators the tools they need to realize limitless opportunities for the American people, or this majority can continue to put up arbitrary roadblocks that stymie their potential.

Now, while I believe that many on the other side have good intentions, I cannot sit idly by while the Democratic Leadership seems to care more about a carbon footprint than an American footprint on Mars. I cannot sit idly by while this Majority continues to say ''no'' to American entrepreneurship in energy exploration. I cannot sit idly by while this Majority seems content to blame the President or the previous Republican Congress.

Blaming the past while ignoring the future is not leadership; that's not why the American people award Majority status to one party or another.

The American people awarded you the leadership reins to solve the problems our country faces on a daily basis, and nothing is more important than our energy independence. I therefore challenge the Democrats and all of my colleagues to start solving the biggest problem facing our country today, energy independence, by supporting this Motion to Recommit with its instructions to relieve NASA of the shackles of section 526.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, for Members who weren't here last Thursday, let me just remind you and recap some of the testimony on this authorization.

This is a bipartisan bill that passed unanimously out of the Science and Technology Committee. It is fiscally responsible. It is a balance between aviation, science research and human exploration; and, quite frankly, it is too important to our Nation, both to our prestige as well as to our future, to jeopardize it trying to score political points.

This amendment was not offered in the subcommittee markup, although there was an enormous amount of collaboration. And it was not even presented to the full committee until less than 24 hours before we voted on it. If this was so important to the Nation, you would think that my friend during the previous 6 years when there was a Republican House, a Republican Senate and a Republican President could have easily passed this. This bill is too important to try to score political points. We need to get something done for the Nation.

Let me just remind you of some of the endorsers of this good bill, and this is a very small listing of so many: Association of American Universities, Aerospace Industry Association, National Association of Manufacturers, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Universities Space Research Association, Information Technology Association of America, National Business Aviation Association, and General Aviation Manufacturers Association. I can go on and on and on. This is too good a bill to be killed on this floor today for partisan reason.

I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN).

Mr. WAXMAN. I urge my colleagues to oppose this motion to recommit. For the last 8 years, our Nation's energy policies have been a fiasco. Gasoline prices are skyrocketing, our dependence on foreign oil is growing, and we are fueling dangerous global warming.

Yet when the Democrats passed even modest reforms that say we need to invest in cleaner fuels, not dirtier ones, the Republican leadership brings forth a motion to repeal them.

This motion would repeal a provision in the energy bill, the Energy Independence and Security Act, that Congress passed last year. In that bill we included a provision that said tax dollars should not be used to purchase new

types of fuels that would cause more global warming than conventional gasoline and diesel fuels. This provision was not controversial. It had broad support, and it would be foolhardy to invest our tax dollars in new fuels that would make us face a greater global warming problem.

Now there have been misconceptions about all of this, and that is why I was pleased the House just adopted overwhelmingly the Lampson amendment. Some of the misconceptions about section 526 say that it would affect the oil companies. But, in fact, the oil companies and other energy companies can do what they want with their own money. If they want to invest in dirtier fuels, they can. This just says the taxpayers are not going to be used to subsidize them.

Some people say section 526 would prevent NASA and other agencies from buying generally available fuel that contains small amount of fuel from tar sands. Well that's not accurate, and the Lampson amendment makes it clear that we could continue to import fuel from Canada. And in all of the acres that are not being drilled on now throughout the west, they can be drilled and this section is not keeping them from drilling. They could be drilled if the oil companies wanted to do it.

Section 526 does not prohibit investments in coal-based fuels so long as the fuels would be as clean as conventional gasoline and diesel fuel.

Global warming is real and it is dangerous and threatens our health, our environment, our economy and our national security. We have to stop making things worse before they will get better. That is a philosophy that makes no sense. And what's worse is this motion to recommit would be a motion that says ''promptly'' and that means that it would kill the legislation by sending the bill back to committee. The bill gives NASA the resources it needs to ensure that those investments are effective. It will enhance NASA's work, and we should not vote for this motion to recommit that would kill the legislation.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, isn't it true that if this motion were to pass, the bill could be recommitted back to the committees from which it came and reported back the next legislative day?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. No. As the Chair reaffirmed on November 15, 2007, at some subsequent time, the committee could meet and report the bill back to the House.

Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 and clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 6063; and the motion to suspend the rules on H. Res. 1002.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 196, noes 225, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 420]

AYES—196

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Capito
Carney
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Costello
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Scalise
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—225

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bilbray
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Castor
Cazayoux
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Foster
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—12

Cantor
Gilchrest
Harman
Hulshof
Jackson-Lee (TX)
McMorris Rodgers
Meeks (NY)
Pickering
Poe
Rangel
Rush
Stark

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded there are less than 5 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1700

Mr. SPRATT and Ms. HOOLEY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mr. WILSON of Ohio changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Stated for:

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 420, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 409, nays 15, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 421]

YEAS—409

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Cazayoux
Chabot
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
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
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Pence
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sessions
Sestak
Shadegg
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
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)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—15

Blunt
Broun (GA)
Cubin
Duncan
Flake
Franks (AZ)
Hoekstra
LoBiondo
McHenry
Myrick
Paul
Petri
Ryan (WI)
Sensenbrenner
Tancredo

NOT VOTING—9

Berman
Gilchrest
Harman
Hulshof
Meeks (NY)
Murtha
Poe
Rush
Stark

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are reminded there's less than 2 minutes remaining on this vote.

□ 1711

Mr. CHABOT and Mrs. SCHMIDT changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PUBLIC RADIO RECOGNITION 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. 1002, as amended, 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 Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1002, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 414, nays 0, not voting 19, as follows:

[Roll No. 422]

YEAS—414

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Castle
Castor
Cazayoux
Chabot
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Filner
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Jordan
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood

Lamborn
Lampson
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Richardson
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sali
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Scalise
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)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
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)
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—19

Brown-Waite, Ginny
Carney
Clyburn
Cohen
Ellison
Gilchrest
Harman
Hulshof
Hunter
Kagen
Marshall
McKeon
Meeks (NY)
Murtha
Pence
Poe
Regula
Rush
Stark

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1720

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Resolution expressing support for the designation of a 'Public Radio Recognition Month'.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 6063, NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that in the engrossment of H.R. 6063, the Clerk be authorized to correct section numbers, punctuation, cross-references, and make such other technical and conforming changes as may be necessary to accurately reflect the actions of the House.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS

Ms. SLAUGHTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–719) on the resolution (H. Res. 1281) 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that I was detained off the floor for the Republican motion to recommit on the NASA authorization bill, H.R. 6063. I obviously oppose enthusiastically the waiving of section 526.

Had I been present, I would have voted ''no'' on the motion to recommit.

GAO DECISION IN AIR FORCE TANKER CONTRACT AWARD

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to announce to my colleagues an important decision was reached today. Thank God for the GAO. An injustice was corrected.

The GAO came out today and held on seven different grounds that the Boeing Company's protest should be sustained. This now gives us a chance to win this competition and to keep these jobs in the United States.

I'm from the great State of Washington where the Boeing Company resides and has many workers. I think this was one of the most important decisions by the GAO. I congratulate them for the comprehensiveness, for the professionalism, and I hope that the Air Force will read this decision and also look at the other factors, industrial base, the use of subsidies against the United States by the WTO. All of these issues that were not considered should be considered in this decision.

These are the crown jewels of American technology, these tankers, and they should be built in the United States by an American company.

KEEP MANUFACTURING JOBS IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, as my colleague from Washington indicated, the Government Accountability Office this afternoon confirmed what many of us thought to be true—the Air Force's process in selecting a contractor to build a new air refueling tanker was badly flawed. The GAO upheld Boeing's protest, concluding that the Air Force ''made a number of significant errors.'' The GAO recommends this contract be re-bid.

This contract was awarded several months ago, and every conversation I have had with Air Force officials raised more questions than were answered. I agree with this independent finding. The Air Force should follow the GAO's recommendation and reopen the bidding.

Awarding this contract to Boeing would create thousands of American jobs. But the bigger question is should we even allow a foreign-subsidized company to bid for U.S. military work? While the GAO rejected the Air Force's process, Congress also needs to address the broader issue of keeping manufacturing jobs in the United States.

I urge the Air Force and Congress to work to make the right choice for American jobs, American taxpayers and the American military men and women.

A GREAT VICTORY TODAY FOR THE AMERICAN WORKFORCE

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my distinguished colleagues from Kansas and Washington State. I especially want to applaud the efforts of NORM DICKS and the hard work that he's done not only on the Defense appropriations subcommittee but throughout his career protecting American technology and workforce.

This was a great victory today for the American workforce. So many of our jobs here, the critical mass of highly trained, highly skilled workers that reside here in this country don't know what a great favor was done today by GAO. This is a rare occurrence that this happens.

But the case that was made by Boeing, that was carried out by Mr. DICKS

and the committee, was so compelling, and the misdirection and information so badly flawed that Boeing was given, that the GAO overturned that decision.

The Air Force has 60 days to respond, but let us hope that we can come together and follow the leadership of Mr. DICKS and get those tankers built here in this country.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE COPS PROGRAM

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

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, the time has come for the United States Senate to free the COPS program. We here in this body, by an overwhelming bipartisan majority, voted to reauthorize the single greatest legislative weapon frankly ever passed by Congress to help reduce crime.

It reauthorized the highly successful COPS program, authorizing the hiring of another 50,000 new cops, authorizing hiring of special terrorism cops for cities like New York that have cops that specialize simply in combating terrorism.

Now, that same bill is held hostage in the Senate, frankly, by my Republican colleagues. The time has come for us to realize that if there has been one program that has been democratic, with a small D, meaning it's had beneficial effects all throughout the country, it's been the COPS program. Whether it's a small sheriff's department or a large police department like New York City, the program has been a success.

We should keep on pushing. There are a lot of things we disagree on, but frankly, this should be one that unifies us. This will give us a chance to modernize this program, get some money into the pipeline in States and localities so that they can go ahead and hire more police officers and continue the successes we have had reducing crime.

□ 1730

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida). 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 without prejudice to the resumption of legislative business.

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.)

ILLEGAL ALIEN CRIME REPORTING ACT

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. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of the House the issue of illegal alien crime.

As many of my colleagues are aware, over the past year crimes committed by illegal aliens have been at the forefront of our national media.

In Los Angeles, an illegal alien has been charged with the March 2008 murder of a young athlete and scholar, Jamiel Shaw. Shaw was gunned down outside his home in a senseless act of violence.

In New Jersey, an illegal alien has been charged with the August 2007 execution-style slaying of three New York college students and the shooting of another. This illegal alien suspect was previously granted bail on child rape and aggravated assault charges.

And in my home State of North Carolina, an illegal alien has been charged with second degree murder for driving drunk and killing a 22-year-old man in a car crash over last fall's Thanksgiving holiday.

While crimes like these are occurring all over the country, the public has no way of knowing the extent of the problem. This is because the Federal Government and the States do not report statistical information on criminal alien crimes. It is for this reason I have introduced H.R. 6192, the Illegal Alien Crime Reporting Act.

Last week, I sent a Dear Colleague letter to every Member of the House to inform them of this legislation. The bill would require States to submit in-depth statistics on illegal alien criminal activity in order to receive funding from the Department of Homeland Security. It would also require all Federal agencies to submit data on criminal activity by illegal aliens. And lastly, the bill would require the FBI to compile this information and produce an annual publication similar to its existing Uniform Crime Report with detailed statistics on illegal alien crimes.

Mr. Speaker, nothing is more important than the security of our Nation and the safety of our citizens. I hope that my colleagues will take the time to consider the issue of illegal alien crime and join us as a cosponsor of the Illegal Alien Crime Reporting Act.

ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I want to express the strong feelings that I and many others have on the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.

Israel was created by a U.N. resolution 60 years ago. People who have stressed the importance of U.N. resolutions with regard to the Middle East sometimes forget to note that when a U.N. resolution was passed which created the State of Israel in a fairly small part of what had then been Palestine, it evoked violent opposition from almost all of Israel's neighbors. That is, those countries which launched an armed attack aimed at obliterating Israel as it was born, in defiance of a U.N. resolution, do not come with clean hands when they talk now about living up to every U.N. resolution. That's no reason to ignore them, but it is a context that ought to be clear.

There are a number of perspectives that people bring to the existence of Israel and its history. There is one that I want to talk about in particular as a liberal.

By all of the values that motivate me to be in public life, the State of Israel is the only nation in the Middle East today that qualifies as a nation that respects them. Whether it is the principle of nondiscrimination—and some things are very controversial in their own country—the rights of women, free speech, the rights of gay men and lesbians, Israel stands out by a very strong margin over all of its neighbors.

I do want to address some of my friends on the left who are critical of some of the geopolitical aspects of this. It's legitimate to do it. Indeed, if you want to hear criticism of the approach Israel takes towards the peace process or the question of settlements, one of the best places to go is Israel. Because unlike every other Middle East nation, Israel is a place where democracy thrives. Indeed, one of the important lessons the existence of Israel teaches the world is that those who argue that if you have threats to your national security, democracy becomes a luxury, are wrong.

Israel was born under attack. It has lived its entire 60 years to date with the great hostility of its neighbors. It has fought a number of wars. And it is today confronted by many nations, Iran, for example, that profess to be interested in its obliteration. Despite that, it has maintained a strong democracy; governments win and governments lose. And the Israeli High Court has a record, frankly, that in some ways exceeds our own U.S. Supreme Court in vindicating civil liberties.

Now, having said that, I will add that I am critical of some aspects of Israel policy. The point, however, is that that's a right that people have within Israel to exercise those differences that others don't. I thought the recent comments by Secretary Rice that were somewhat critical of what Israel was doing were useful in helping move towards the peace process.

On the other hand, it ought to be clear, and I do believe Israel should continue to maintain its willingness to withdraw from most of the West Bank, I think they should be removing settlements, but it must be remembered, Israel did withdraw from southern Lebanon and it did withdraw from Gaza in the face of a good deal of controversy at home, one under Prime Minister

Barak, one under Prime Minister Sharon, of two different parties.

Tragically, in both cases, Israel's voluntary withdrawal was followed by the entrenchment in those two areas of organizations dedicated not simply to territorial change, but to Israel's obliteration, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza. And they have used those places from which Israel withdrew as bases for attacks. I understand the emotional reaction that says, ''We'll never do that again.'' I think it would be wrong; I do not think it would be in Israel's best interest. That does not mean they should not be able to defend themselves, of course they should.

But the fundamental point is this: Yes, there are serious issues about how to pursue peace. Nowhere are they more openly debated than within Israel itself, and that is one of the great glories of its 60 years.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A further message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

ENERGY IN AMERICA

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. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that happens when you come to the well and you debate somebody, a lot of facts get distorted and they're really not very accurate. So tonight I would like to quote some accurate figures for my colleagues in their offices. And if I were talking to the people of America—I know I can't, but if I were talking to the people of America, I would ask them to listen to these figures as well.

We import 4.3 million barrels of oil a day, that's for gasoline, we import that much per day. We actually use 21.5 million barrels, but we have to import 4.3 million barrels of oil because we only produce about 17.2 million barrels of oil. So we're short 4.3 million barrels of oil a day.

We have an emergency stockpile, but that would only last a short period of time. In April of 2008, the U.S. Geological Survey announced that an estimated 3.65 billion barrels of oil and 1.85 trillion cubic feet of untapped natural gas exists in Montana and North Dakota. If we could go after those reserves, we could start reducing the price of gas at the pump and energy for people all across this country.

In the ANWR, it holds the single largest deposit of oil in the entire United States. It's 10.4 billion barrels of oil, and it's more than double the proven reserves in the entire State of Texas. And according to the Department of Interior, there is an estimated 8.5 billion barrels of known oil reserves and 29.3 trillion cubic feet of known natural gas reserves along our coastlines, with 82 percent of the oil and 95 percent of the gas located in the Gulf of Mexico.

Now, a lot of my colleagues have said, well, my gosh, the oil companies can go ahead and drill off the coast on the Continental Shelf. Well, let me just talk about that for a minute. Only 3 percent of the Continental Shelf has been given to the oil companies in the way of permits, and those permits run 5 to 10 years. Now, during that period of time they have to decide, with seismic tests, whether or not there's oil down there. If they think there's some oil down there, they drill a test well. And if they drill the test well and it doesn't show enough oil to make a profit, then they don't go ahead with it.

So most of these things that they have there right now are not being explored because there is not enough oil to make a profit. Those permits are not allowing them to make a profit, so they're not building those derricks. Those oil derricks cost as much as $2 billion. Now, if you're going to invest $2 billion in an oil derrick, you want to make darn sure that there's oil down there. And only 3 percent of our Continental Shelf is being used, 97 percent is not being used. And we could explore for oil all along that coastline, but we aren't able to because of the rigorous position that this Congress has put the oil companies in. And I'm not saying that the oil companies are totally free of any blame. You know, they have made an awful lot of profit. And my colleagues want to tax them on the windfall profits that they have been getting. If that's what they want to do, that's fine, but that's not going to give us one more drop of oil. The only way we can get one more drop of oil is to drill for it.

The Department of Interior estimates that there are untapped resources of about 86 billion barrels in the Gulf of Mexico and 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Gulf of Mexico.

As I said, on the Outer Continental Shelf they have 1.76 billion acres of untapped resources and not leased on the Continental Shelf. And since the 1980s, the United States has prohibited oil and gas drilling on most of the Outer Continental Shelf, except for a limited area in the western Gulf of Mexico.

We could be energy independent if we just looked at our own resources. Approximately 121 companies own the rights of the Continental Shelf, but they lease only 3 percent of the Continental Shelf. And about 15 percent of the U.S. natural gas production and 27 percent of our oil production comes from that area.

They invest billions of dollars to acquire and maintain their leases, and unless there is oil down there that they find from seismic tests or a test well, they're certainly not going to build a $2 billion oil derrick unless they can make a profit.

I would just like to say to my colleagues, the problem is that we're buying oil from the rest of the world; we're importing oil from the rest of the world. We're dependent on them. And the appetite for energy is growing very, very rapidly: China wants more oil; Taiwan wants more oil; countries all across the world that are expanding want more oil. So we're in competition with them for oil. We could be energy independent and not have to lean on countries like Saudi Arabia or Venezuela, but we aren't doing it, we continue to import.

One of my colleagues tonight said, you know, we want to clean up the environment. Well, if we import gas and oil, you think that's not going into the atmosphere? Why should we import Saudi oil when we can get our own? If we want to clean up the environment, we can do that the same way.

Whether or not we import the oil or use our own oil, it makes no sense not to drill. We could bring down the price of gasoline and energy in this country very rapidly if we announced tomorrow that we were going to start drilling in the United States of America.

Let me talk about one other thing that is very important. In 1981, we had 324 oil refineries in this country; today we have 148. We haven't built a new refinery in 30 years. And that's one of the problems, you've got to get the oil to market. You've got to produce gasoline and other energy products from the oil, and you have to have refineries to do that. And we haven't built a new refinery in over 30 years. And we had the refineries that we did have cut by more than 50 percent.

This country ought to move toward clean energy, but in the process we should make sure that we use our reserves to create gasoline here in America and not have to import all that oil. We ought to be drilling. We could be energy independent if we really wanted to.

□ 1745

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago, the American Printing House of the Blind opened its doors in my home district of Louisville, Kentucky, to make educational materials accessing to blind students. That day in 1858 stands as a milestone, not just for the education of the vision impaired but for the improved education of our community as a whole and the history of learning in the United States of America.

Prior to the early 19th century, it was generally presumed that, with rare exceptions, people who were blind simply didn't have the capacity to learn. Through experimentation and repeated

success, it became clear that the blind were failing to learn, not for lack of intellectual capacity, but because information was not presented to them in a manner that they could perceive. Once information was presented in appropriate ways, primarily through touch and sound, blind students began to achieve.

In the 1830s, residential schools for the blind began to open across the U.S., and eventually almost every State established a school specifically designed to meet the needs of students who were blind and visually impaired. In those early years, each school produced the tactile educational materials that its own students needed. In 1842, Kentucky joined the ranks of these States when Louisville's Kentucky Institution For the Education of the Blind began making tactile materials for its students in a basement facility.

It didn't take long for schools producing these highly specialized materials to realize they were duplicating effort and wasting valuable resources. The idea of developing a national publishing house for accessible materials for people who were blind and visually impaired took hold. Since the facility in Louisville, Kentucky, was centrally located among the existing schools for the blind and had developed an effective distribution system utilizing the Ohio River, our community was selected as the site for the American Printing House of the Blind, which was chartered by the Kentucky legislature on January 23, 1858.

Because the expensive process of printing educational materials in raised letters for a small percentage of the population was not commercially viable, Federal funding was sought to assure a permanent source of revenue to support this important work. In 1879, the 45th Congress of the United States passed, and President Rutherford B. Hayes signed into law, the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, designating APH as the official source of textbooks and other educational aids for legally blind students below college level.

Since that time, APH has provided adaptive and specially designed educational materials, including textbooks in Braille and large type, tangible teaching devices, educational tests, and special instructional aids and tools essential for the education of students who are blind and visually impaired. As identified needs require, APH utilizes outside expertise by establishing innovative partnerships with publishers of textbooks and testing materials, commercial manufacturers, universities and many other industries.

We in Congress have continued to appropriate funding for APH each year since 1879. As a result, this national, non-profit corporation now serves over 58,000 students into every U.S. State, providing the visually impaired the tools they need to they need to learn and excel.

In addition to textbooks and other academic materials, APH manufacturers and adapts daily living tools and materials. Talking computer software provides access to the wealth of information available via the Internet, and electronic mobility devices assist with safe travel from one place to another. APH has developed tools that help people with low vision learn to utilize the limited vision they have more efficiently, and new technologies are delivering reading materials electronically.

The technology and treatment are impressive, but here is what stands out. In the 1800s, a child born blind had no future. Losing one's sight ended independence and ambition. Today, that is not the case. Sight is no longer a prerequisite for leading a productive, independent and fulfilling life. And that is thanks in large part to APH. For tens of thousands of men and women without sight, APH has provided the keys to live, learn and thrive. People who are blind now work in our communities. Children who are blind pursue the same dreams as children with sight. And mothers who are blind read stories to their kids before putting them to bed.

As we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the American Printing House for the Blind, we also recognize the wisdom of the 45th Congress for their initial investment in educational opportunities for our Nation's blind and visually impaired students back in 1879, and I trust that my colleagues and those who follow will continue to support the successful precedent they set.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE U.S.-COLOMBIA TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I stand to once again raise my concern and, frankly, disappointment by the decision of the majority party in this House to turn its back on America's best friend in Latin America. Ladies and gentlemen, the oldest democracy in South America is the Republic of Colombia. Colombia is a thriving democracy, a nation of 42 million citizens, the second largest Spanish-speaking nation in the world. And in Latin America, everyone recognizes the Uribe Government, the democratically elected Government of Colombia, as America's most reliable partner and America's best friend. And this House, with the Democratic majority voting almost unanimously, voted to turn its back on Colombia, America's best friend.

It is kind of interesting. Look at the progress that has been made in Colombia. President Uribe was elected by the people of Colombia to put an end to a longstanding civil war where narcotrafficking, leftist guerrillas, known as the FARC, ELN and right-wing narcotrafficking paramilitaries known as the Paras, all three of those terrorist groups have attacked the democratically elected government and destabilized the democratically elected government. And President Uribe was elected to put an end to that conflict. And he has made tremendous progress.

In fact, thousands upon thousands of paramilitaries have laid down their arms and agreed to honor the peace process and integrate back into society. Unfortunately, the FARC, which has ties to the government of Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, continues to fight. But the government of President Uribe has made tremendous progress pushing the FARC into the far reaches of the country. And today, villages that have never seen the presence of a national government, certainly not in decades, today enjoy the security provided by the government of President Uribe, tremendous progress.

In fact, violence has dropped so much, cities such as Medellin, which was once known as one of the most dangerous places on the planet, today is safer than the city of Baltimore. In fact, the murder rate of Baltimore is higher than Medellin, Colombia. So it is safer to walk the streets of Medellin than it is to walk the streets of Baltimore. And we want to commend the Uribe Government, the democratically elected Government of Colombia for the progress they have made.

We have an opportunity with the trade promotion agreement to further cement our ties with our best friend, an agreement that is good for American workers. It is good for American manufacturers. It is good for American farmers. Right now Colombian products enter the United States essentially duty-free. Their agricultural products and their manufactured goods come in without any tariffs. But U.S.-made products such as bulldozers that are made in the district I represent, if they are exported to Colombia, they face tariffs of 10 to 12 percent. Some of our agricultural commodities such as corn face tariffs of 45 percent.

Clearly, those tariff barriers, those taxes, make U.S. products less competitive with Argentine corn or Asian competition for construction equipment. And I would note since this trade promotion agreement was signed between the United States and Colombia, over $1 billion U.S. in tariffs have been imposed upon American goods, manufactured goods and agricultural products that have been exported to Colombia. And we are waiting to ratify this agreement which would eliminate those tariffs and make U.S. products more competitive.

The bottom line is the trade promotion agreement is good for American workers. It is good for American farmers. It is good for American manufacturers. In fact, the agricultural community will tell you that the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement is the best agreement in our Nation's history with any other nation when it comes to access to products grown in the United States and exported to Colombia. The bottom line is it is a good agreement.

Now my friends on the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, say, well, Colombia hasn't done enough. We need to make them do more. There is still some violence there. And until they eliminated it all, well, gee. Well, the bottom line is that Medellin, which was once the murder capital of the world, is now safer than the city of Baltimore. And some people who oppose this agreement say, well, there has been some labor leaders who have experienced violence. But look at the history they have. But as the Washington Post just pointed out, it is safer to be a labor leader in Colombia than it is to be a regular citizen. In fact, the murder rate of labor leaders is lower than the average murder rate of any other citizen in Colombia. Again, President Uribe has made progress.

Let's honor our Nation's best friend in Latin America. Let's honor our most reliable partner. Let's bring to this floor the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement. Let's bring it up for a vote, because we know it will pass. Let's get it ratified and move forward so we can grow our economy.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON H. RES. 1247 AND H. CON. RES. 350

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ordering of the yeas and nays be vacated on House Resolution 1247 and House Concurrent Resolution 350 to the end that the Chair put the questions de novo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will now resume on certain motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

COMMENDING THE ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1199.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1199.

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. BURTON of Indiana. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

AN INFORMED CITIZENRY IS THE CORNERSTONE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, an informed citizenry is one of the cornerstones of our American democracy. In order to make the right decisions about our country's policies, Americans must know the facts. That is why every member of the administration and every Member of Congress has the duty to be honest and open with all of us. This is especially true when it comes to decisions about war and about peace, because the lives of our soldiers are actually on the line.

But recent events have reminded us that when it comes to Iraq, we have not always had the information that we need. Earlier this month, the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report on Iraq that actually proved this. It showed that before the invasion began, the American people were told that there was a strong connection between Iraq and terrorist groups like al Qaeda. But the committee found that there was no conclusive intelligence to support such a claim.

Also, the American people have recently had the chance to read the book by a former White House press secretary who acknowledges that propaganda was used to sell the American people on supporting the invasion of Iraq.

□ 1800

And this House, this House of Representatives, is pretty familiar with the Pentagon's spin operation to get retired military officers to give us a rose-colored view about the situation in Iraq. The House has voted to stop the Pentagon from continuing such a program, and the Pentagon is expected to respect that ban.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve better. They need to have a true and accurate picture about what is currently happening in Iraq. That's why every Member of this House should be demanding that the administration give Congress the facts about its current status-of-forces negotiations with the Iraqi Government. I have repeatedly demanded that the administration share this information with Congress, including the establishment of permanent bases, because there was an alarming report in the press that the United States may actually be planning nearly 60 permanent bases in Iraq, this happening after the House has voted multiple times to prohibit permanent bases in Iraq.

Over the weekend, senior Iraqi leaders called for a complete exit of all U.S. troops, and they called for this at the expiration of the current U.N. mandate which comes this fall. Imagine their opinion of the United States' permanent bases in their country. Sixty permanent bases are absolutely unacceptable. One permanent base is unacceptable.

This House has voted many times, as I said, against the establishment of permanent bases, and the administration should not try to get around that by making fine, legalistic points about what constitutes a ''permanent base.'' In fact, we must apply the duck test. If it looks like a permanent base, if it walks like a permanent base, it is a permanent base.

Because the economy has replaced Iraq as the top news story of the day, some may be lured into thinking that nothing very important is happening in Iraq these days. Well, one important statistic is, if it has not happened today, we are about to report 5,000 of our troops dead, but nothing could be further from the truth about not being important.

While we aren't paying attention, the administration is negotiating status-of-forces negotiations that could make our country a foreign occupying power in the Middle East for years or for even decades to come. What a grave mistake that would be keeping our troops in harm's way and continuing the best recruiting tool that the terrorists could ask for.

Instead of planning for a permanent occupation, the United States needs to follow a very different path. We should redeploy our troops and military contracts. We should give the Iraqi people back their sovereignty. We should help them rebuild their shattered country. We should work with the international community to bring peace and stability to the region.

Mr. Speaker, Congress must demand to know what is being negotiated in the name of the American people. What deals are being cut? What is going on behind closed doors? What exactly is the administration demanding and why? It is time for the American people to have the facts, and it is time to safely and responsibly bring our troops and independent contractors home and to give Iraq back to the Iraqi people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. CASTOR). 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.)

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is June 18, 2008 in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Madam Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,931 days since the tragedy called Roe v. Wade was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them, Madam Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common. First, they were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone, and each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it's time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government." 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." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and 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. Madam Speaker, it is who we are.

And yet today another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We have failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection we should have given them. And it seems so sad to me, Madam Speaker, that this Sunset Memorial may be the only acknowledgement or remembrance these children who died today will ever have in this Chamber.

So as a small gesture, I would ask those in the Chamber who are inclined to join me for a moment of silent memorial to these lost little Americans.

So Madam Speaker, let me conclude this Sunset Memorial in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard it tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies; that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express; and that 12,931 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that it is time that we stood up together again, and remembered that we are the same America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust; and we are still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their unborn babies than abortion on demand.

Madam Speaker, as we consider the plight of unborn America tonight, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each one of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of innocent unborn children. May that be the day when we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect these, the least of our tiny, little American brothers and sisters from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is June 18, 2008, 12,931 days since Roe versus Wade first stained the foundation of this Nation with the blood of its own children; this in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

THE PURSUIT OF OIL: ITS ECONOMIC AND NATIONAL SECURITY RAMIFICATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, the other day, I went to fill up my car with gasoline, and the price tag was a little over $75. I gulped because, of course, it's always a shock, and it has been for the last several months every time I've filled up my car, and I know it has been for most persons.

Most Americans, I'm sure, do not consider this to be just the price of doing business and having to go to work. ''Okay. No problem. I'll just do this and not complain.'' But, you know, I thought about it, and there are so many people to thank for this situation we're in that I'm paying $75 to fill up my car, and it's probably going to get worse by the way. We all recognize that. I was wondering who to thank for this situation, who to thank every single time I go into the gas station. Who is really responsible? Of course, I think, for every single American, every time they go in to get their gas and every time they look at that pump and have it say something startling back at them like $75 or more, of course, thank your local environmentalist first. Start off there because, of course, it has been years since we've had the kind of control that they've exercised over especially the Democratic Party. As a result of that control that they exercise and the power that they bring to bear, we have been unable to drill for oil in the United States, off of our coasts or in ANWR.

So thank them first of all.

Then, of course, you could also thank your Democrat Congressman or Senator, if you have one, because, for years now, they've been able to avoid either allowing us to drill for oil in the places where we have oil in this country or, in fact, in the last few months, they've been able to even block any sort of vote on it whatsoever for fear, of course, that they would have to explain such a vote to their constituents.

So there are people who we can thank for $75 when you go and fill up your car at the gas station. I just hope every single time this happens to every single American and that, every time they go in and put the credit card in the reader and see that money deducted, they remember who to thank.

Also, they should remember this: That it's not just this economic issue. It's not just what it's going to take out of their pocketbooks—mine included—that is causing great pain and consternation. It's also the fact that this is a national security issue. It's not just an economic issue. People are going to have to recognize that we are in a situation, in an international situation, where we are funding our own opponents. The people who want to do us harm are being funded to the tune of billions of dollars a day, every single day, in order to accomplish their goal to eradicate the United States of America from the face of the Earth.

Ten years ago, Osama bin Laden said a strange thing. Well, he says many strange things, but this was a particularly odd statement. He said that he wanted to see $144-a-barrel oil. Now, this was 10 years ago. Of course, oil was nowhere near this price, and everybody looked at that statement and thought it was peculiar to say the least, but he said that's what he believed it would have to be in order for the West to pay the price that he believed was deserving by all the Muslims in the world who have had their oil stolen from them over the years.

The point is he used oil. He talked about oil as being a tactical part of the war against the West.

Well, who would have thought we'd be right at that $140-a-barrel mark within the 10-year period of time that he projected? Who would have thought that that was possible?

It also is an indication, as I say, of the fact that we are facing a much bigger problem than just the economic burden. It is imperative that we strip oil of its strategic value. Not only are billions of dollars flowing outside of the United States into countries that are enemies of the United States', but in fact, those dollars do come back to the United States often in terms of investments that are made by countries through things we call sovereign wealth funds. These are funds that are

controlled by governments. There is $3 trillion, we believe, that is controlled by sovereign wealth funds that are primarily in the Middle East or in countries, again, that are opponents of the United States'. $3 trillion.

With that money, a lot of things can happen. You could probably even affect, to a certain extent, the futures markets, but you could also, certainly, buy up a lot of stock in a lot of companies. Well, to a certain extent, that's good. That's healthy. I'm not going to argue with the fact that we're getting investment back out of some of those dollars, but some of those dollars go into companies that have very important information available to them that are part of the technological base we have in the United States that we rely upon to keep us one step ahead of the game. Although we try our best to make sure that significant technological advances in strategic areas are not available to countries outside the United States, when you own a lot of stock in those companies, believe me, you have access to a lot of information, and they are making use of it.

So there are ramifications to this outflow of dollars in the pursuit of oil, and there are a lot of things we have to do. Yes, build wind towers. Absolutely. Any kind of alternative fuel you want to talk about and pursue is find with me, but when it comes down to it, we have to drill. All of those other things will not solve our problem and certainly not in the time frame that will allow us to breathe easier with the thought that the enemies of the United States' are not actually being enriched by our own need for their oil. We have it. It's abundant. There are trillions of barrels of oil just in the Colorado-Wyoming plateau that are locked up in shale now, but there is technology available that will allow us to extract it.

There are all kinds of things that we can do if only the government will get out of the way and allow it to be done. That is what is required. Let's do it as soon as possible.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON H. RES. 1199

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ordering of the yeas and nays on House Resolution 1199 be vacated to the end that the Chair put the question de novo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WEINER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WEINER 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 Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RESPONSIBLY RESPONDING TO GAS PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. GIFFORDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, rapidly rising gas prices are a serious concern in my home district of southern Arizona. It's a serious concern across the Nation, but I think it's important that we recognize that today's prices are the result of policies that have been put in place for many years and, in fact, for many decades. There are responsible actions that we can take now to address the problem. Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, also known as ANWR, is not one of them. In recent weeks, some of my colleagues have called for opening up the areas off of coastlines and in ANWR to drilling.

Current Federal law prevents drilling in these specific areas. Claims that opening these areas would increase drilling, would increase supplies, would bring down the prices have been made all across the House here. They would have us believe that there is nowhere else to drill in the United States except in the areas that are currently off limits to drilling. They claim that we need to increase domestic supply, and if we want to do that, our only option is to open up these incredibly sensitive environmental areas.

This information, Madam Speaker, is blatantly wrong. The oil industry has not tapped all of its drilling options. It holds leases for drilling on lands that have not yet been utilized. In the last 4 years, the Bureau of Land Management has issued over 28,000 permits to drill on public land. However, at the same time, they have only opened up or have actually drilled on fewer than 19,000. So that means that companies are effectively stockpiling 10,000 drilling permits not currently being used to increase domestic oil production for our Nation.

Of the over 47 million acres of onshore Federal lands currently leased by oil and gas companies, only about 13 million acres are currently in production. Now, the trend offshore is similar where 44 million acres are currently leased but where only 10.5 million acres are actually currently in production. Counting onshore and offshore leases, oil and gas companies hold drilling rights to almost 68 million acres of Federal land and waters that the oil companies are not drilling on.

Based on today's production rates on Federal lands and waters, we can estimate the result if oil and gas companies were to tap all 68 million leased but currently unused acres. Our country could produce an additional 4.8 million barrels of oil and 44.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas every single day. That would nearly double the total U.S. oil production and increase natural gas production by 75 percent. It would also cut U.S. oil imports by more than a third.

Finally, that amount is more than six times the estimated maximum daily production from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Six times. Calling for drilling in ANWR, I believe, is an attempt to hide years of poor energy policies that showed more support and more sympathy for the big oil and gas companies than for hardworking Americans.

□ 1815

We do have serious energy challenges in our country, and I agree that increasing domestic supply should be part of the solution. We do not, however, have to drill in some of the most pristine and environmentally sensitive areas in America to solve this challenge.

We have millions of acres of resources available to us right now, and we must insist that they get used. That's why I am joining with many of my colleagues to promote practical policies to solve the gas crisis.

Two responsible and reasonable bills that have been introduced offer some solutions. The first is H.R. 6251, the Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act. It's a bill that would force the oil and gas companies to either produce on their Federal leases or give them up.

The second bill is H.R. 6256, the Responsible Ownership of Public Lands Act. This is a bill which will help lower gas prices by compelling the oil companies to begin producing oil and gas on public lands that they are currently holding but not using. It will also use an escalating fee on land that oil companies have leased but are not using for production. Both of these bills would provide some strong incentives for the oil companies to stop stockpiling these leases and begin using them.

We would also help reduce the demand of oil and gas by investing in a new energy economy, revenue raised by these fees will be invested in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs to help reduce our dependency on oil. So while we continue to develop renewable energy solutions like solar energy, we have to continue to power our economy today.

That means yes, we will need gas, we will need oil, but we will need them at an affordable price. We must require that the oil and gas companies use the Federal resources that have already been given to them. By increasing domestic production on leases they already hold, they can lower prices at the pump.

That's why I support H.R. 6251, H.R. 6256, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in backing these intelligent proposals.

RESEARCH BEFORE DRILLING

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, let me just say to the young lady who just spoke in the well, the new Representative, that if you are going to drill you have to have a geological study done that shows that there is oil there. Those leases are 5 to 10 years, and if there is no oil there, they are not going to put up a derrick.

On the Continental Shelf, they have to do seismic studies to make sure there is oil down there. If they think there is oil down there, they drill a test well. If there is not enough oil down there, they are not going to build a $2 billion derrick. Those platforms cost as much as $2 billion.

Unless it's profitable, they are not going to drill there. They have to drill where they know there is oil. That's why we need to expand beyond the 3 percent of the Continental Shelf we are talking about and get the other 97 percent involved. If we did that and they got those leases, we could become energy independent.

Drilling in the ANWR, which is the size of Dulles Airport, is not ecologically dangerous. We should go ahead and drill there and get the oil. We could get 1 to 2 million barrels of oil a day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MOORE of Kansas 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 New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOLT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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.

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORANGE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1199.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1199.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF FLAG DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1219.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1219.

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.

JOHN P. GALLAGHER POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 6150.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6150.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GERALD R. FORD POST OFFICE BUILDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and passing the bill, H.R. 6085.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6085.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1237.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1237.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF AMERICAN EAGLE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 1247, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Guam (Ms. BORDALLO) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1247, 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.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD END COMMERCIAL WHALING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the question on suspending the rules and agreeing to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 350.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 350.

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.

FORECLOSURE PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS: FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE FORECLOSURE CRISIS IN OHIO

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, yesterday the Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee of Financial Services held a major hearing in the City of Cleveland, Ohio. The subject was the foreclosure crisis facing the American people.

I want to thank Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS of Los Angeles, California, who did such a phenomenal job, all the Members who attended and certainly Chairman FRANK, the chairman of the full committee, for allowing this proceeding to occur outside of Washington.

Cleveland, without a doubt, is ground zero in the mortgage foreclosure crisis facing Ohio. Although every quadrant of our State is suffering from rising foreclosures, the crisis is most acute in Cuyahoga County where nearly 15,000 new foreclosures occurred in 2007, a 350 percent increase compared to 10 years ago. Over 85,000 Ohioans have faced foreclosure, and we expect those numbers to increase as we look across our country and see homeowners nationwide just in the next 2 years lose nearly $356 billion on their property values with no end in sight. Some estimate the crisis will cost our country over $1 trillion.

Almost 9 million homeowners now owe more on their mortgage than their home is worth, the largest share since the Great Depression. If we really look at what has been happening, for the first time since World War II in the critical home mortgage sector, our largest form of an average family's net savings, net home equity is now negative. That is below 50 percent. As a whole, Americans owe more on their homes than they are worth.

This enormous loss of wealth affects not just homeowners but our Nation as a whole. We are a net debtor country, both publicly and privately. There have been inferences of a taxpayer bailout to prevent the financial collapse of major Wall Street banks and brokerages such as Bear Stearns, and Merrill Lynch and Lehman Brothers are waiting in the wings, probably, for life support there too.

Most often, when a homeowner can't make ends meet, they lose their home. But when a giant firm like Bear Stearns can't make ends meet, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve and the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury get involved and billions of dollars of capital, much of it now from foreign places like Abu Dhabi, are found to fill the gap.

Mergers of banks are approved expeditiously and, just in case, the Federal Reserve opens its New York window with our taxpayers becoming the insurance company of last resort, pledging the full faith and credit of the United States to the big banks, and now, for the first time in history, to brokerages, to investment firms. Will ordinary homeowners in our Nation ever be afforded equal attention by both the Federal Reserve and the Treasury?

It does not appear to be so with the rate of foreclosures and bankruptcies rising every month. There remains much Congress does not know about what got us here. An old professor of mine at the Harvard Business School used to say, ''If you want to know the way the world operates, follow the cash.''

Yet Congress has not really followed the cash. It has not investigated the paper trails of firms, brokerages, regulatory boards, government bodies and key individuals who initiated and carried out these risky subprime and internationalized security practices. An equity washout of this magnitude does not happen by spontaneous combustion. It was willed to happen.

Specific people in specific places set the pieces in place to allow it to proceed. Many have been handsomely rewarded. America needs to know who they were and are.

It is incumbent that Congress authorize a full independent investigation of the tools of the roots of this crisis that trace back to the unstable period following the savings and loan crisis in the late 1980s. The development of the internationalized mortgage security instrument itself deserves more attention.

In effect, it became a clever and high-risk credit device, with little transparency, that acted like a bank. It created money, or at least the illusion of it, in a Ponzi-like scheme. It did so without the normal regulatory restraints of full accounting and proper examination.

How could the regulators have let that happen? America should know the individuals and organizations that allowed these risky instruments and practices to proceed.

One of the first institutions to embark on subprime lending was Superior Bank of Hinsdale, Illinois. That bank had a return on assets 7½ times the industry average, a CAMEL rating of only 2. Yet its executives were financially rewarded for presiding over ruin.

Where was the Office of Thrift Supervision?

I am going to place in the RECORD many questions the American people need to know answers to in order to figure out who is responsible for this crisis and to prevent further raids on the private savings of the American people.

□ 1830

INTERDICTION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, as chairman of the Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and co-founder and chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Drug Policy, I rise today to commend the United States Coast Guard and the United States Navy for their ongoing efforts to combat the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

On Monday of this week a Coast Guard C–130 aircraft using long-range surveillance technology identified a self-propelled semi-submersible in the Eastern Pacific suspected of carrying illegal drugs.

The U.S. frigate McInerney, which has been on a counternarcotics patrol effort since April and whose personnel include a Coast Guard law enforcement detachment—attempted to intercept the submersible.

Unfortunately, before U.S. authorities could arrive at the submersible, its crew had sunk it. However, the Coast Guard reports that all four individuals who had been on board the submersible were rescued from the water, and one of them subsequently confessed that he and the other individuals were using the submersible in an effort to smuggle between five and seven tons of cocaine.

In 2007, the Coast Guard removed 355,000 pounds of cocaine with an estimated street value of more than $4.7 billion from circulation. This, Madam Speaker, was a stunning new record of drug seizures by the Coast Guard in a single year, and it included the seizure in August of last year of a semi-submersible vessel loaded with cocaine estimated to be worth some $350 million.

I commemorated these achievements in December of 2007 with an event in my district in Baltimore, a city that knows all too well the scourge that illegal drug abuse creates in a community. Put simply, every ounce of cocaine seized at sea is an ounce that cannot reach our Nation's streets and that cannot destroy a life.

It is estimated that in my own hometown of Baltimore, 60,000 of city's 650,000 residents are currently drug dependent, mostly abusing heroin and cocaine. In 1996, Baltimore had the highest rate of drug-related ER visits in the Nation, and AIDS became the leading cause of death among African-American men and the second leading cause of death among African-American women.

However, in 2006 The Washington Post reported that the number of drug overdose deaths in Baltimore had fallen to the lowest level in some 10 years. These drops have been made possible by ongoing efforts at the Federal level, and all levels of government, to interdict drugs and to provide treatment to enable drug users to overcome their addictions.

Unfortunately, the use of submersible vehicles to smuggle drugs is increasing and represents the ongoing efforts of drug runners to develop new smuggling techniques that can enable them to evade detection.

On April 24, 2008, the House adopted the Coast Guard Authorization Act, H.R. 2830, by a vote of 395–7. This act includes a provision adopted as an amendment during floor consideration that would make it a crime to operate a submersible vehicle for the purposes of trafficking drugs.

This act awaits consideration by the Senate which I hope will move quickly to pass this legislation to strengthen the Coast Guard and to respond to the emerging threats we face, including new methods of drug smuggling.

I again commend the United States Coast Guard and the United States

Navy, and especially the crew of the McInerney, for their tireless efforts to stem the flow of illegal drugs into our Nation.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE RISK OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION CREATED BY THE ACCUMULATION OF WEAPONS-USABLE FISSILE MATERIAL IN THE TERRITORY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110–126)

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 to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2008.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *June 18, 2008*.

AMERICAN ENERGY NEEDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, it is great to be back tonight to address some of the concerns that most Americans have today, and that is the cost of energy.

Let me start out by saying that I have gotten numerous calls and e-mails concerning the price that the average American is paying for gas today. As most Americans realize, gas is up over $4 a gallon. When the 110th Congress started and the new majority took over, after telling the American people that they had a commonsense plan to bring down the skyrocketing price of gas, and keep in mind at the time it was about $2.20 a gallon, we have seen the price of gas go up to $4.05 now.

I have had many people call and ask me if I had signed the petition on several Internet sites, such as AmericanSolutions.com and some other sites that were out there where the American people could go and sign a petition telling us, Madam Speaker, Members of Congress, that they wanted us to drill now, drill here, and bring down the price of gas.

And so as I was thinking about that, I thought, you know, we are hearing from our constituents about they want us to do something, to take action, to bring down the price of gas because that's what we do in this Congress, Madam Speaker, is we are here to help the American people, and especially with their pocketbook.

So as I got to thinking about that, I said you know we all hear from our constituents, but sometimes our constituents don't know how we really feel because a lot of times these issues are not brought to the floor, or when they are brought to the floor they are so convoluted and so hard to understand that someone could go home and answer their constituency as to why they voted for a bill or why they voted against a bill because you could probably take either side on any piece of legislation that is passed in this body. I said I need to come up with the simplest thing that I can to make sure that the American people understand and there can't be any wiggle room from their Member of Congress where they stand on bringing down energy prices.

And so I came up with this petition. What this petition says is ''American energy solutions for lower gas prices. Bring onshore oil online. Bring deepwater oil online. Bring new refineries online.'' We have not opened a refinery in this country since the late 1970s.

So what I did, this is the petition we have had on the floor all today for Members to sign. What it says is very simple; very, very, simple, ''I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.'' That's about as simple as it gets. It's not politics. It's not gotcha politics, it is the kind of change that I think the American people want, honesty and common sense. Honesty and common sense.

So today we have had a total to date of 126 people out of 435 sign this petition. So 126 out of the 435, and I hope that it will continue. But I hope, Madam Speaker, that people understand that they can go to House.gov/Westmoreland and find out if their Congressman has signed the petition or not. And if not, you might want to ask them why because the thing is pretty clear. It just says ''I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans.''

That's about as simple as it gets. So we are proud to have this petition and we are proud of the American people, Madam Speaker, for going to these Web sites to sign these petitions to let us know how you feel about paying these outlandish gas prices at the pump.

What I want to do is make sure that the American people know how their Congressman feels about the pain they are suffering at the pump.

I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just say that some Members of Congress do more work than others, and I want to congratulate you on taking the time and making the effort to get Members on record as to how they feel about drilling for oil and natural gas to get our energy prices down and get the price of gasoline at the pump down. You are to be congratulated. I watched you on television the other night, and I just wish you had more time to get into more of the details because what you say on the floor ought to be heard by people all across this country.

I took a 5-minute special order before this one, and I didn't get a chance to go into some of the issues in depth that the American people ought to know about because they hear so much on both sides of the aisle. On that side of the aisle they say, oh, my gosh, the oil companies have so many leases, they ought to drill on those leases, both on American soil and also on the Outer Continental Shelf.

The fact of the matter is there are an awful lot of leases already out there, given to the oil companies, but they are not going to drill in those areas unless they know there is oil there. And that's why there are seismic tests that take place. And those tests don't take place until they get the lease. And that lease is for 5 to 10 years. If they don't move on that lease within 5 to 10 years, then they have to give the lease up and it is re-bid, and somebody else might go for that lease.

But chances are they will do everything they can to find oil in that 5 or 10-year period because they don't want to lose a lease that has a lot of oil within it. So they do seismic tests to find out if there is oil there.

If they drill on a lease that is next to another lease, sometimes they do test drills, if it looks like it is a promising lease or leases around that area, they

are going to drill on all of them. When they drill for oil off the Outer Continental Shelf or on the Continental Shelf, it costs $2 billion, up to $2 billion to erect a platform and a derrick and the drilling process, to drill down and get that oil out of the ocean.

An oil company is not going to do that unless they think that there is oil down there. Why would you spend $2 billion unless you know there is oil there. That's why they get the leases and do the seismic testing. Once they do the seismic testing, if it looks like there is oil there, then they drill. They have to go through a very strenuous program of getting more and different kinds of leases so they can drill. But once they find there is oil on those leases that are already available, they will drill there because they want to get the oil, they want to make the money.

The problem we have is we are only using 3 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf. The other 97 percent we are not drilling on. That really is troubling because there may not be an awful lot of oil in that 3 percent where they have the permits right now. But the other 97 percent, we know there is oil out there.

I would like to give a couple of facts that I think my colleagues and the people of this country ought to know.

□ 1845

We use 21.5 million barrels of oil a day. ANWR, and I think my colleagues talked about this, is the size of Dulles Airport. You're not going to kill the environment of Alaska if you drill in the ANWR. Alaska's almost three times the size of Texas, and the size of the Dulles Airport is not much bigger than Capitol Hill here, and we could drill there in an environmentally safe way and get up to 1 to 2 million barrels of oil a day.

ANWR has 10.4 billion barrels of oil, more than double the proven reserves in Texas. And in April, the U.S. Geological Survey announced there was estimated, now get this, 3.65 billion barrels of oil and 1.85 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in Montana and North Dakota.

On our coast lines there's 8.5 billion barrels of oil and 29.3 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. And you can go on and on and on and on. We have the gas. We have the oil necessary to become energy independent. We can get it in an environmentally safe way. And as my colleague from Georgia has said time and time again, we need to go after it.

We shouldn't be giving our money to the Saudis. They're not our best buddies. They're supporting these madrassas that teach Wahabiism, which is a radical form of Islam, all over the world. And they're using our money that they get from us buying the oil over there, and we can get this energy right here in America. And we can also, as my colleague has said, bring the price of gasoline down. And that's what I think Americans want all over this country.

The problem is, they may be confused because this young lady that was just down here, a new Member, she came down and started quoting all these statistics like there's this many leases and that many leases and why aren't they drilling there because they can drill.

You're not going to drill unless a seismic test shows there's oil and you do a test well in the ocean. You're not going to drill on land unless there's a study that shows that there's oil down there. We know that there's oil in the ANWR and so we ought to drill there.

All I can say to my colleague and to anybody that's paying attention across this country is that we need to get all of the Congressmen on board. My colleague's working his tail off to get it done. We need to get everybody on board so we can drill for oil and natural gas in this country, get the price of energy down, get the price of gas at the pump down to way below where it is now. And we can do it, but what we have to do is get every Congressman in this body on board and in supporting drilling in America. We can do it.

And the American people have done it in the past. They've written letters in when we tried to hold, when we tried to tax the interest on their savings in the banks, they sent us cards that looked like snow coming down in this place. And we ended up reversing ourselves and saying we weren't going to tax or collect taxes at the bank when they got interest on their savings. They didn't like that.

So if the American people, and I say this to my colleague from Georgia, if the American people want us to drill in America they need to contact their Congressman and say get on with it. Quit messing around. Drill for oil here. We want to be energy independent. We've been talking about it for over 30 years. It's time to act.

With that, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I thank my friend from Indiana for being here with me and supporting this initiative that we have. And I want to just hit on a couple of points that Congressman BURTON made.

You can go to house.gov/westmoreland and find out who has signed a petition that basically just says, I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas for Americans. There are also some links to some other sites where you can get some of these energy facts that we're giving you and find the truth for yourself.

One of the things that he mentioned was the size of ANWR and where we're drilling. And he mentioned that the drilling site is about the size of Reagan Airport. And it is, in comparison to the total State of South Carolina. Here is the comparison of ANWR to the Continental United States. You can see the size of Alaska compared to the United States. This is the wildlife refuge here, and we will show you, in a moment, Madam Speaker, what this wildlife, the refuge area looks like.

Here is the drilling site up here. So you can see that this is, the ANWR, the wildlife is about the size of South Carolina. And where they're talking about drilling is about the size of Reagan Airport, in comparison. You can see how much land is there.

The other thing the gentleman from Indiana mentioned was the amount of land; 68 million acres is what the majority party claims is out there, and that may be a true statement. I can tell you that 54 percent of the exploratory holes that have been drilled between 2002 and 2007, 54 percent of them were dry holes.

Now, we all want to use common sense. We don't go to the hardware store to buy groceries. So why would you drill somewhere that there's no oil? You wouldn't do it. Or no natural gas. Why would you do that? You would not do it.

And so after they do all of these tests that they do that is required by the government for them to do, they find out on these leases that have been offered up by our government that there is no oil. There is no energy resource there, so why are we saying drill there?

Now, also I've heard that these energy companies are stockpiling these leases. Well, that's not true. It's already in law that if they don't drill, they lose it. If they do not go with the terms of the lease, they lose that lease. And so if they have a problem with them not drilling where they said they would drill in the time that they said they would drill, according to the lease agreement with the government, that's not their problem. That's our problem, that we're not enforcing the laws that we have. And so, you know, there's a lot of myth going on here, Madam Speaker.

But I did want to bring up one thing because I think this is really what gets my blood boiling when I think about our dependence on foreign oil. Let's look at Mr. Castro and Mr. Chavez down here. And I want to read something to the American people, Madam Speaker, and to you and to the people in this House. It says, in a recent interview on Al Jazeera, Chavez called for the developing nations to unite against U.S. political and economic policies. What can we do regarding the imperialistic power of the United States? We have no choice but to unite, he said. Venezuela's energy alliances with nations such as Cuba, which receives cheap oil, are an example of how we use oil in our war against neo-liberalism, he said.

Another quote, right down here under the picture of him hugging Castro, or as he put it on another occasion, we have invaded the United States, but with our oil.

The next thing over here, Madam Speaker, is a check that American families and businesses write out every day to Hugo Chavez for $170,250,000. That is a day. That money could be coming to American companies and to

American workers and creating Americans jobs and bringing down the price of gas at the pump for Americans.

Now, we're writing one of our enemies a check for $170 million a day when we could be using that money to create jobs in this country.

The other thing I think is important to realize is that not only have we not drilled and used our own natural resources for our own citizens, but we've not built any refineries. Our refining capability has not been added to since 1978. We have not built a new refinery.

Now, we are importing, and listen to this—this is not oil, crude oil that we're importing—we are importing gasoline, a product that has been refined in another country, we are importing about 6.9 billion gallons of gasoline, refined crude oil into this country every year, and probably the same amount in diesel.

There is no excuse for us sending our hard-earned dollars to foreign countries when we could be doing it ourselves, and especially, going to the pump and paying over $4 a gallon when this new majority for the 110th Congress had a commonsense plan to bring down skyrocketing price of gas when it was $2.20.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just say to the gentleman from Georgia, he mentioned that we haven't built any new oil refineries since the late 1970s, and he's correct. But there's one other thing that he didn't mention. I know he knows this.

In 1981 we had 324 oil refineries. Today we have 148, less than half. There's no way that we can handle the oil that we could get out of the ground to lower the price of gasoline unless we build new refineries. And we've come up with an idea to put it on some of these closed military bases around the country, and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have not seen fit to agree to that.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Last month we had a motion to recommit that demanded that within 90 days we recognized three bases that had been under the BRAC, or the base realignment, to start looking at refineries and it was voted down by the majority.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Yes.

Along those lines, they say, well, it's going to take 10 years if we start drilling. It's going to take 10 years if we start refining it. I don't think that's the case. Most people think in 2 or 3 years we could really be pumping a lot of new oil out of the ground if we were allowed to drill for it, and we could refine it and get it in the gas tanks of the people across this country.

But even if it did take 10 years, when do we start? We were talking about this back during the Carter years in the late seventies. That's 30 years ago. And we haven't done a darn thing about it.

If we're going to keep the cost of energy down, with the demand for energy growing at a very rapid rate around the world, China wants more, everybody wants more oil to expand their economies, building new roads and everything else. There's a war going on right now for the oil that's available, the energy that's available in this world. If we're going to be able to keep pace, which will help us economically, and, in fact, maybe save us economically, we're going to have to drill in America for oil and gas. We're going to have to get on with the program.

I can't talk to the American people, but if I were talking to the American people, like my colleague from Georgia would like to do, I'd tell them get on with it. Call your Congressman. Write them. Sign all these petitions and tell them we want to be energy independent; we want to drill here in America.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you.

My friend, Mr. PETERSON, who is a real expert on energy, I'm glad you joined us tonight.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, it's a delight to join you. It's a historic day. Natural gas hit $13.28 a thousand cubic feet. That's almost double what it was last year at this time. What that means is Americans heating their 60 million homes this fall will pay almost twice as much to heat them as they did last year, on top of tremendous price increases to travel in their vehicles.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. So if they think the price at the pump is painful, wait till they start trying to stay warm.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. This has all happened without a storm in the gulf, which always escalates prices, without any country having a major coup or problem, or without any terroristic attack on the system. I don't think anybody dreamed that we would have $135 to $140 oil at this time of the year. We are in the middle of June. We're not even into the heat of the driving season yet, and here we are with $13, I mean, we're within a few pennies of the peak of natural gas prices after Katrina.

Dow Chemical made a statement just a week or so ago that in 2002 it cost them $8 billion for natural gas to run their company. It now costs them $8 billion a quarter.

Here's what's happened. They used to be 60 percent onshore. Those were great American jobs. They're now 34 percent onshore.

In South America natural gas is a buck and a half. In Russia it's barely over a buck. I mean, there's cheap gas all over the world. If you're making petrochemicals, polymers, plastics, fertilizer, if you're melting steel, melting aluminum, I want to tell you, if this Congress does not change its view on offshore, shale oil and ANWR in the very near future, bricks and glass will be made in Trinidad, South America. They will be shipped here in a day and a half in a boat, and there will not be a blue collar job left in America, because natural gas is the mother's milk of manufacturing and processing.

□ 1900

They use it as an ingredient. Even the skin creams that our women love to soften, that's a derivative of natural gas. Natural gas is one of the most unique—chemists say we should never burn it. It's too valuable. But we are now using a lot of it for electric generation; 23 to 24 percent of our generation is now natural gas. And that is as we cease to permit coal plants around the country, they're all going to be natural gas plants. If the Senate continues its foolishness with carbon taxes and CO_2s, that's all going to push the business to a natural gas which only emits one-third of the CO_2 of other fossil fuels. But we're not preparing. We need to.

Today we had a committee meeting scheduled, and my chart here shows—it's interesting the Democrat talking points say that 80 percent of available resources are available to the American companies. That's not true. Eighty-five percent of our offshore is not available, period. The whole west coast is not available. The whole east coast is not available. About a third of the gulf is not available. That's where the prime oil and gas is in this country. They have it locked up. They want it locked up. They like these high prices because it's forcing Americans to change to other fuels. That is true.

But let me tell you, I'm not sure how long the American economy can handle $130 oil and $13 natural gas without collapsing. And once this economy collapses and the world economy goes into a recession, we're going to be a decade digging ourselves out of the hole. There will never be money to balance the budget. There will never be money for heat and helping people winterize their homes. This country is on the verge of losing its economic base.

Cheap energy. I was born one mile from Drakes Well, the first oil well. It changed the world. The whole manufacturing process of the world began in this country because of cheap energy. We've had $10 oil and $2 natural gas most of our lifetime. We had a spike in the 1970s, we had a spike in the 1980s, and a spike in the 1990s. We went to renewables. We tried to do other things, but it always came back to cheap gas and cheap oil. Nothing could compete.

Well, folks, there's a philosophy around here that if we don't produce fossil fuels, we're going to produce something else. I'm saying ''what.'' What are we going to produce? If we double wind and solar—and I'm for that in the next 5 years—but that doubling something in 5 years is ambitious. We're still less than one percent of our energy needs.

I mean, there is no renewable. The renewable that has been the most generous to us and the most growth is woody biomass. Nobody talks about woody biomass. Hasn't had any incentive. No tax incentives. There's a million Americans this year probably going to help heat their homes with a wood pellet stove. Burning sawdust pellets. That's biomass. Many companies

in my district—I come from the finest hardwood forest in America, northern Pennsylvania. Lots of mills. Lots of factories. The sawdust now is a byproduct. They heat their factories with it. Some of the coal plants use 20 percent wood waste because it allows them to sneak under the air standards if the coal is just a little dirtier than it should be. So it has found its marketplace.

And the cellulosic ethanol that we're betting on. We have a mandate of 36.5 million gallons of—or 36.5 billion gallons of ethanol annually by 2030. The first 15 to be corn, and we know what's happened there where we're now at $7.86 corn as the market closed today. It was $1.80 just a short time ago. We're competing food with fuel. I didn't protest it. I had my concerns. But $8 corn is not something you can afford to burn.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Absolutely.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Isn't it true that we have a 54 percent tariff on ethanol brought into this country? Fifty-four cents a gallon on ethanol brought into the country, and already right now corn is at $7.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. What, $7.86.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And with the devastation that we've had in Iowa, in some of the corn-producing States, it would be nice if we just give a temporary halt to that tariff to get this ethanol in.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That is true. But I want to make a point there. I'm not against ethanol. After the 15 million they want to go to—or billion gallons, they want to go to cellulosic.

But we have to remember we have a mandate on cellulosic ethanol that still is in the laboratory. We do not yet have the design of a successful cellulosic ethanol plant that we know will be productive that will compete. So that's pushing.

I wish we were pushing coal to liquids and coal to gas with the same fervor because we know Fisher Tropes and two or three other messes, we could make gasoline, we could make fuel oil, we could make jet fuel out of coal. But no. There has not been much pushing for that.

I am encouraged that the President came out for offshore, but that's a big move. We've been pushing him a long time. He didn't come out quite as strong as I had hoped. He said he would lift the Presidential moratoria if we lifted the congressional moratoria. I think he should have lifted his first and said, I'm lifting the Presidential. You lift. But he didn't. But I want to give him credit for going there.

I want to give candidate McCain credit. He's come out. Offshore. That was not his normal position. And someone said, Well, he's a flip-flopper. Well, folks, when you see the light, when you see the facts—you know, just a few years ago the argument was we should use theirs. It was cheap. We shouldn't be using ours. Well, that's not true any more. At $135 a barrel and $13 a thousand for gas, it's time to use ours.

We enrich Americans. I mean, for us not to create the hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of jobs in the production of energy in this country and put Americans to work producing our energy, we could be self-sufficient in natural gas, we could have reasonable natural gas prices. Natural gas could actually fuel a third of our auto fleet. All of our short-hauled vehicles, all of our construction vehicles, all of the little vehicles running around at the airport, all of those could be on clean green natural gas. No NO_X, no SO_X, and a third of the CO_2. It could be compressed gas or it could be propane. Either one. They all can run—that's known technology. Why we're not going down that road, I don't know.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, Mr. PETERSON, let me say this. We have that technology, and there was a push in the late 1990s, mid- to late-1990s to convert gasoline engines to propane. Then the EPA put such testing regulations on the emissions testing for these different types of makes and models of cars, a lot of people just got out of the business. It was not a commonsense thing for EPA to do. They should have gone to these people doing the conversions and said, What can we do to make it easier and faster for you to do this propane conversion and the same thing with natural gas?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. It's hard for me to understand because natural gas burns cleaner than gasoline. And as we were talking, somewhere between 10 and 50 percent of our gasoline now comes from Europe. How does Europe have extra? Well, they've switched to diesel. They have diesel cars. They have extra capacity.

A year ago in the spring we had very high gasoline prices. Not this spring but last spring. And remember they were higher than they were in the fall when oil was much higher. I think oil was $60-some a barrel and we had $3 gas and everybody wondered why. Well, in the spring when we start switching and using more gasoline, Europe was short themselves. They had used more gasoline. They didn't have the surplus they normally supplied us, so they couldn't supply our needs.

So when you don't have enough, the market goes up. We didn't have enough gasoline in the world market, and so we paid higher gasoline prices last spring with $63 oil than we did last fall with $85 and $90 oil. Didn't make any sense, but that is the marketplace because Europe could not give us. But we're dependent on Europe.

But back to natural gas. It just amazes me because here is what scares me: $13 natural gas is not a world price. That's an American price. We have the highest natural gas prices in the world. So many Members of Congress can't seem to understand that that it's not a world commodity. It's country by country.

And so when you have the highest prices for natural gas and your company, like Dow Chemical uses $8 billion a quarter. That's $32 billion a year. You have got to produce your products where it's cheaper, and when it's a fraction of our cost—it's not like a half or a third—it's a fraction, sometimes, in some of those countries.

So we're going to lose all of the industries. We won't melt steel in this country. We won't bend products. We will be cooking products in other countries because you use a lot of gas for heat. Anything that uses a lot of natural gas, if we don't get that under control—and the silly part of that is, we could be self-sufficient in our total lifetime. There is no shortage of natural gas, onshore and offshore, and this country tried to lock up their own plateau.

In the last appropriations bill they locked up the shale oil in the west, sneaked it in the bill. Of course, the prohibition of drilling offshore is not legislation. It's stuck in the Interior bill. I was here 5 or 6 years before I knew it was there, and when I started talking about it, most Members of Congress didn't know it because it started 28 years ago. We have a vote every year. You know, today that vote was canceled. I'm not quite sure why.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Did the gentleman offer an amendment in the appropriations bill that was voted down?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. In the first subcommittee last Wednesday we had six Republicans ''yes'' and nine Democrats ''no.'' Now, it's not totally been a partisan issue. This was the first time they locked up their vote.

This new administration here, the Speaker and her team, have been very good at locking up votes. You have to admire them. They can get people to vote against their districts, vote against what they believe. But they've decided they're not going to open up the Outer Continental Shelf.

Now, we were interested today whether they would still lock them up, whether they could hold them because in 2006 we passed a major offshore bill. We had 40-some Democrat votes. There are a lot of Democrats here who realize energy's important, and to produce your own is not some evil thing. With 67 percent dependency on oil, and half of that comes from unstable, unfriendly countries who gave us our tariffs, it would seem to me that everybody could agree let's eliminate at least half of our foreign dependence; let's stop feeding our enemy; let's stop allowing giving them the cash to buy up our Chrysler building, buy up our companies, buy up our industries. You know, industries in this country are getting purchased by foreign countries, and most of them are people who have our oil money.

I don't think this is the America that Americans want. But I want to tell you

something. I have faith in the American people. There's a debate going on right now. I have been on four different talk shows today. I have been on probably five or six radio shows today. Lots of print media yesterday. I did 15 different discussions. The American people are angry.

Newt Gingrich came out with a poll: 73 percent of Americans want offshore production. Rasmussen came out with a poll Monday: 63 percent in their poll. It's going up daily because this is a discussion going on in this country, and they're mad. They're mad as hell. And they ought to be mad because we are locking—this Congress for 28 years has locked up America's resources that every other country uses.

There is no country in the world—Norway, Sweden, are they environmentally friendly countries? You bet they are. New Zealand, Australia, are they environmentally-sensitive countries? You bet. They all produce offshore.

Offshore is not a threat to our beaches, it's not a threat to our shorelines. It's a savior. It's where our cities are, it's where our population is, it's where our refineries are, where our gas lines are.

You know, in New York City in zero weather, sometimes we will pay two and three times the American price for natural gas in zero weather because they can't get enough there. The price when the world is paying 10, they'll pay 25 or 30 for a few days at a time because if we had offshore production, we could feed them their—these cities wouldn't be paying these outrageous prices when cold weather comes.

Last year for the first time—because we use so much for electricity now—last year for the first time in the history of this country, in two summer months when it was really hot, we made so much electricity with natural gas because in a real hot week, all of the peaking plants run all day long. They run all day long because that's the only way to keep the grid up. We actually drew down gas out of the reserve.

See, at this time of the year we don't use all of our gas so we put it in reserve. We're putting $13 gas in the ground for next winter. Add storage costs, add pipeline charges, and a profit for the gas-distribution company, you're talking about pretty expensive gas. Last year we were putting $6.50 and $7 gas in the ground this time of year.

Americans do not know what is coming. The industrial users are already paying 70 percent more this year because it passes through quicker to them. But in my State, PUC, every 90 days they adjust the price. This fall Americans are going to get hit with another bullet. It's going to be expensive home heating. And we should be doing something about it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. We need to be doing something about it, and that's what we're trying to do.

And to my friend from Pennsylvania, and thank you for coming down tonight and helping Mr. BURTON and myself with this because we know that you are an expert on it and that you have been trying to correct a situation. Even when the Republicans were in the majority, you were the lone voice crying in the wilderness about this; and I really wish we would have paid more attention.

But now is the time when natural gas is $13-plus, the price at the pump is over $4, the price of oil in a barrel is up to about $140. And the gentleman mentioned some of the Norwegian countries. And you know Norway, you know, 30 years ago was dependent on foreign oil. And they said, You know what? We're going to do something about it.

□ 1915

Norway is dependent on tourism, fishing. I mean, they are very conscious of their natural resources. Today, they are the third largest exporter of crude oil in the world.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman would yield, the other success story we all hear about is Brazil. Doesn't everybody say Brazil is independent because of ethanol? Fifteen percent of their energy is ethanol. They went offshore. They just had a huge oil find offshore, but they are self-sufficient. They don't import energy anymore.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And they're celebrating. I saw in the paper where they found that big oil reserve offshore, and the Brazilian people were celebrating over finding it, and we know it's there and can't even get our country to drill.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. We keep hearing from over there that it was all ethanol. Ethanol was just a piece. It was 15 percent. The rest was normal oil and gas energy. But they had a plan.

I think we ought to have a plan for North America. Stop and think about Alaska and Canada. Canada is great. Canada produces oil and gas right off our main coast.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. We import from them.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Fifteen percent of our natural gas comes from them, and they are our largest supplier of oil by far.

Right off the Washington coast they produce. They have produced since 1913 in Lake Erie and sell us the gas. They drill gas only in Lake Erie every summer. They don't do it in the winter, but they do it every summer and sell us the gas. And we aren't even allowed to drill under the lakes horizontally.

It makes no sense what we're doing in this country. Yesterday, I read an article that we ought to be partnering with Russia because they have so much resources and we need to be better friends with them. I'd rather help Mexico because they have great resources but aren't very good at producing them. They're not very efficient at producing energy. But they have a lot of gas and a lot of oil.

If we had a North American game plan, where Mexico, the United States, and Canada, and Alaska, where we said let's produce our own energy, we could get there. I don't think we can be self-sufficient on our own, I mean that sincerely. I don't see it ever will in our lifetime, but we could be self-sufficient in North America, and we could say to OPEC: ''So long, see ya.''

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. If the gentleman would yield, first of all, I would really appreciate if I could get the information on natural gas that you just gave us tonight because I was aware that it was a major problem, but I didn't know it was as big a problem as it is and is going to be.

And I'd just like to say something about the polls that show that people are becoming more and more concerned about energy and natural gas and gasoline.

The people are ahead of Congress. The majority, not too long ago, were saying environmental concerns were by far the biggest problem that we face. Now, seventy-some percent are saying, hey, we want to clean up the environment but at the same time we want to keep the economy moving and we want gasoline at a price we can afford and natural gas at a price we can afford. And so seventy-some percent now say drill in America. They know. They see it.

And if our Congress doesn't do something about it, as you said, we're probably going to suffer the consequences. I will make a prediction. At that point, there will be a knee-jerk reaction and they will throw everything to the wind, say drill everywhere, do whatever it takes, but at that point, it is going to take a long time to catch up, and our economy could suffer tremendously.

I'd just like to make one more comment about the Persian Gulf. The Persian Gulf is a tinderbox right now. We don't know what Iran's going to do. If Iran develops a nuclear capability, there may be a major war over there because Israel is not going to want to be threatened like they are threatened, and we could end up seeing a couple of ships sunk in the Persian Gulf and see a large percentage of our energy stopped flat, stopped. And if that happens, we're not going to have the energy to keep this economy moving immediately, immediately, not to mention the problems that you were talking about a minute ago.

I'd like for you to explain to me, if it's okay with the gentleman who has the time, I'd like you to explain to me why the United States can't be completely energy independent. Because when I look at these statistics on the trillions of cubic feet of gas that's there and the billions of barrels of oil that's there, it seems to me that if we just dealt with our own resources, we could become almost energy independent.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, we're so far behind the curve right now, we were talking to Minerals and Mines Management today. Many of our rigs went to Russia to drill because there's so much more activity there. The big owners go where the action is, and they're being paid bonuses to go to North Africa to drill. We don't have as many rigs in the gulf. Thirty percent of our rigs are gone. Our infrastructure has dwindled because we've not opened up.

Now, the issue of can we be self-dependent, we would have to open up everything. It would take years to get the rigs here. We'd have to do coal-to-liquids, coal-to-gas. I mean, it would take a long time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I guess the point I was trying to make is I know it would take a long time because we are behind the curve, but if the United States got with the program like we should have back in the seventies, we could be almost energy independent right now.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Twenty percent of our grid is nuclear. We need 45 new plants by 2030 online to stay 20 percent of the grid, not grow. See, everything's shrinking. Hydro is becoming a smaller piece because we're not building dams. Everything's shrinking.

Nuclear stayed even because all of our nuclear plants today are producing beyond their design capacity. We have enhanced their ability to make energy. I mean, America on nuclear needs to get on to what France has been doing, the reprocessing and reuse the fuel we have instead of storing it, where we use it, and when you get down to the end, you have very little fuel.

But this country made a decision legislatively, we're not going to reprocess, we're not going to go down that road. So we've made a lot of bad decisions.

And I say, how did this happen? Eight years ago, natural gas was $2; oil was $10. The argument was, do we use theirs or do we use ours? Just 10 years ago. In fact, we hit that a couple times 6 or 7 years ago. We had some real cheap energy just for a few months there. We got so complacent.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I wish you would really stress that point and the gentleman from Georgia would stress that point that natural gas 10 years ago was $2.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. $1.80.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. And oil was how much?

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. $10 a barrel. That's been most of our lifetime.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. And now it's 14 times that.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Unbelievable.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. To the point the gentleman makes, if we had started back in the seventies or the eighties or the nineties, we'd be further down the road. I don't want my grandkids to say, ''Pa Pa, why didn't you start it in 2008?''

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I don't want to have to answer that question to my grandkids.

If you will remember, this Congress in 1995 passed drilling in ANWR. President Clinton vetoed it. Today, we would be getting 1 million barrels of oil a day from ANWR.

The American people do not want us to stay here in the fetal position. They want us to act. And they don't want to hear the excuses that the majority is giving for us not taking action. We need to act, and some of the things that the gentleman has mentioned are so common sense.

I mean, we can drill as environmentally sensitive as anybody in this world. Our technology is the best. We've got the smartest and the brightest. We can do what France is doing with their nuclear waste. We can do what France is doing with their nuclear power. We can do what Brazil is doing with the coal-to-oil. We can do what Norway's doing with being environmentally sound drilling.

This is America. This is the place where we are the leaders of the world in so many things, and for some reason, we want to have our hat in our hand, going to even our enemies, begging them for them to increase their oil production, use their natural resources, because we are not willing to do it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. America is a can-do Nation and we need a can-do Congress. And right now, the Congress, and both the House and the Senate, which is controlled by the other party, they have a we-can't-do, we can't do this, we can't do that. As a result, we're going to be short of energy, and the cost is going to go through the roof, and the cost of gasoline per gallon is going to go up, I believe, even further.

What the American people I think need to do is call their Congressman and Senators and say, hey, we want a can-do attitude, start drilling, let's get energy independent.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the gentleman would yield, how did this happen? I know how it happened. I'm going to give you eight—and there's more than eight—eight organizations that are running this Congress when it comes to energy.

It starts out with the Sierra Club. You know what their Web page says? They're against oil shale development. We're not doing it. They're against coal liquefaction. We're not doing it. They're against offshore energy production. We're not doing it. They're winning.

Greenpeace: Phase out fossil fuels. We're trying to do it and we don't have a replacement. That's really what's going on. We've caused the world shortage.

Environmental Defense: Must eliminate power plant smokestacks, enemy number one.

League of Conservation Voters: Coal-to-liquid, wrong direction, can't do that. We're not doing it.

Defenders of Wilderness: Every coastal State is put in harm's way when oil rigs go up. That's offshore. They're opposed. And they're winning.

Natural Resources Defense Council: Coal mining is evil. And tell me coal isn't under attack. Coal is under attack. Close to 70 coal plants have been turned down by the States in the last 7 months.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. American jobs. We're losing American jobs.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. And those coal plants will all be natural gas plants which will further exacerbate the natural gas prices.

Center for Biological Diversity: Oil and gas drilling on public lands has devastating effects and must be stopped. They're winning.

Friends of the Earth: Liquid coal is dirty, costly, mustn't do it. They're winning.

These eight organizations are running this Congress.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. To the point that you're making, and I think that's what, Madam Speaker, the American people don't understand, the reason the majority is failing to act on our ability to drill in our own lands is that their base wants gas to be $10 a gallon at the pump because they do not want us driving cars, and they want us to be dependent on them.

And so they are not doing anything. They are laying in that fetal position in a hunkered-down state because their base does not want this to come down. They don't want us to drill. They don't want us to use the shale-to-oil or coal-to-oil. They don't want us to use the clean coal technology that we have. They don't want us drilling for this natural gas.

And this is one of the things that we were just talking about. The gentleman from Pennsylvania mentioned these different organizations. If you receive something in your mailbox about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, you may get some pictures like this.

The reality of it is that is a real picture of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge right there. It's a tundra. It's a frozen tundra. It's what it is. I don't even see a tree on it.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I wish you'd hold that chart up again that shows how big the ANWR is. I think the American people are under the impression that the ANWR is a huge place. It's the size of—you said Reagan airport, I said Dulles, but airports are airports.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. This is the part that is talking about being explored for oil.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. The very small part of the yellow at the top is where ANWR is.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. That is the part that we know the billions of gallons of oil are under. That's the part.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. They have twice the amount of oil there that they have in Texas, and I just cannot understand why we're not drilling there.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. See, this is a picture of it. It's a frozen tundra.

It goes back to the fact that we are continually getting further and further behind. I think the American people, Madam Speaker, are at a point where they're saying we are wanting some action. And that's the reason we came up with the petition for Members of Congress to sign because we are the ones that can create the action. The American people can't create the action. It's our duty to create the action.

And so we started the petition, and this is a petition for just the Members, the elected Members of this body.

It says: American energy solutions for lower gas prices. Bring onshore oil online, bring deepwater oil online. And I guess we need to add natural gas to that, too, because that sounds like something we need to get on in a hurry. But also bring new refineries, bring new capabilities of refining this oil where we don't have to import 6.9 billion gallons of gas into this country a year.

And so what we did, we came up with a petition that's simple. This is not hard for anybody to understand, and you can't dance around it. It basically says: I will vote to increase U.S. oil production to lower gas prices for Americans. And we've got every Member, even the Delegates, a place to sign here. So far, out of the 435 Members, plus the Delegates, I don't know if that's seven delegates or whatever it is, we have 126 signatures. And so it's going good, and you can go to house.gov/westmoreland to find out if your Member of Congress has signed it or not.

We're trying to make this as simple as we can, to make us a responsive body, a body of action, rather than just laying here saying ''we can't'' to ''we can.''

□ 1930

And I think that the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentleman from Indiana have made terrific points here tonight, and I want to thank you all for coming.

We've got about 8 minutes, so I'll give you a couple minutes a piece to close, and then we'll wrap it up.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, let me take just 1 minute and say that this is a critical issue. The American people know it's a critical issue, but I don't think they know how critical it is or how critical it's going to be, the natural gas, the gasoline, the lack of energy, the lack of electricity, possibly, if we don't get this.

And so, you know, it is a critical time for us. And the American people really need to contact their Congressman and their Senators and let them know that they want to move towards energy independence by drilling here in the United States. We have the ability to move toward energy independence. We have the ability to lower the price of gasoline. We have the ability to lower the price of energy that's going to be needed to heat our houses and our businesses this winter, but we're not doing it. And if we don't get with it, as both my colleagues have just said, we're going to reap the whirlwind. The economy is going to really suffer. It's not going to just be individuals, it's going to be the entire country.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. PETERSON.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Well, it's interesting, we have the talking points of the Democrats that they have 68 million acres under lease; there are—some are saying 5,500 leases, some are saying 10,000 leases: That's enough, they're not producing. I had one of them challenge me in a debate today that he wanted me to join on a bill with him to force the oil companies to drill where they are. Folks, if it's not productive, if they've drilled 10 dry holes, they're not going to drill anymore. And in some of those deep water leases, it's 7 or 8 years before you get to productivity.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Let me just add one thing. Each one of those drilling sites, if they drill and they find oil, it costs up to $2 billion to drill there. And if they're not going to make any money, they're sure not going to do that.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. They're drilling platforms, and it takes years to get there. So some of these are in process. A lot of them are old, tired leases where we're now drilling between wells. And the return, we're drilling three times as many wells as we used to and we're getting much less oil and gas because we're in old, tired fields.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Twelve percent lower production and an increase in drilling.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. That's right. We need to get out into the fertile fields where we'll drill less holes in the ground, but we'll get massive prime production where you get into a fertile field that's got great gas pressure and great oil pressure and we'll get huge volumes.

We've been deprived. In fact, on the Outer Continental Shelf, we're showing here, we've not even allowed seismographic in the last 35 years. We don't even have a modern measurement out there. We had old seismographic, what we're measured by; but new seismographic is like taking a black and white TV with a new modern flat screen TV. There's not much comparison, is there? No. Well, we've prevented that.

I mean, I guess what's scary is that while we're talking about this issue, you know what's going on in the Senate? They're talking about climate change. They just voted down, thank God. And Mr. MARKEY's committee here has a new climate change bill. If we go down the carbon tax road, we're going to add another 20 or 30 percent to energy prices. Nobody disputes that. That's insanity. I mean, available affordable energy for America is the number one issue facing this country, and anybody who isn't for that doesn't get with the American people. They understand this.

Let me say this: If we don't deal with this issue in this Congress, the middle class in America will be destroyed. We don't have more years, we're years behind. The middle class in America will disappear because by the time they heat their homes and fuel their vehicles, they're not going to have money. I have a neighbor lady who makes $300 and something a week. She pays $175 a month annual gas bill to heat her home. She has two kids, $100 a month to buy groceries. She said, if my gas bill doubles, I don't have any food money. She's going to have to get a second job and still try to raise two teen-age kids with a second job to pay. Folks, that's not what America is about. Last year, we had seniors in my district keep their houses at 58 degrees because they couldn't afford to keep them warm. That's not the America we should be providing.

If we don't deal with energy prices, the middle-class, blue-collar jobs are all going to disappear. The middle class is going to disappear. And we're going to have a country like so many other parts of the world where we have the rich and the poor. And the government is going to have to subsidize the poor because they can't afford energy.

It's a crisis in America. In fact, I think we're 4 or 5 years beyond when we should have started. I don't quite know how we catch up. Every day we delay, every month we delay, the American people are going to pay a bigger price. This is not the America my father gave me in my inheritance. I want to return our young people with hope, with affordable energy.

Eight years ago energy was cheap; it's never going to be cheap again. It's up to this Congress to do what's necessary and provide energy for America. And all those talking points that the Sierra Club have given the Democrats don't cut it.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you. And let me just close with saying this: You're probably going to hear later on tonight that there are 68 million acres out there to drill on. Keep this in mind, Madam Speaker, we don't go to the hardware store to buy groceries. We're not going to drill on land that does not have resources under it. If you look at the Outer Continental Shelf and the lands that the Federal Government have inside this country, it is 2.5 billion acres of land. You're going to hear that the oil companies have these leases and they're not drilling them. It is law today that if a company that leases land does not honor that lease agreement, that lease is taken away from them.

These arguments will not hold water. It is time to act, and the time is now.

It is time that this Congress turns into a Congress of action that wants to move forward—our being less dependent on foreign oil—and quit relying on our enemies in an unstable region to produce our oil, to produce our energy.

So I want to thank the two gentlemen for joining me tonight. I hope you will go to house.gov/westmoreland and see the people that have signed up and believe in the fact that we need to increase U.S. oil production to lower the gas prices for all Americans.

And Mr. PETERSON, you can close.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. If the Democrats win this debate and we don't produce energy—if we use these old statements of 68 million acres and 80 something percent is leased, that is not factual; 2.5 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf is leased, the good spots are not leased—then we are giving the future of this country away.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And Madam Speaker, with that, I know you have enjoyed this, we yield back the balance of our time.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate having proceeded to reconsider the bill (H.R. 6124) ''An Act to provide for the continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes'', returned by the President of the United States with his objections, to the House of Representatives, in which it originated, and passed by the House of Representatives on reconsideration of the same, it was that the said bill pass, two-thirds of the Senators present having voted in the affirmative.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity. I want to immediately yield to my friend. There were a lot of facts thrown out here, and the folks who are paying attention here in the Chamber may want to hear the response.

I yield to my friend from Pennsylvania.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I appreciate it.

We are going to continue to tell the story of gas prices, what we've just heard. And to keep on the message and to pick up where it was left off with the previous speakers, we're talking about the 68 million acres, here's the key point—a couple of key points: One is, there's 4.8 million barrels of oil per day every day that would be available underneath those 68 million acres. That's the number, 4.8 million barrels per day every day. And we'll talk later about that in comparison to ANWR and other issues, but just to keep on the message. These are not 68 million acres that the Federal Government just said we're going to give you the deserts in Arizona and we're going to give you a bunch of areas that are not productive. These are 68 million acres that are currently leased to oil and gas companies.

Now, presumably the oil and gas companies would only choose to purchase a lease if there was some possibility that there was oil and gas underneath there. And as I've said, the estimated oil and gas—or oil, at least—that's under there is 4.8 million barrels per day. But that's the key point; these aren't just 68 million randomly chosen acres, these are 68 million acres that the oil and gas companies themselves chose to enter into a lease agreement so that they can drill for oil and gas. That's the key point. And they're not doing it.

As we talked about a few nights ago, there are a variety of reasons why they're not doing it. One of the reasons is that they're stockpiling these leases to put on their balance sheet, declare them as assets and raise up their profits and help their stock price. That's part of it. Part of it is that the geological work and the surveying and the construction takes a lot of time. And that's being done on some of these acres, 68 million acres. So we're going to get there, in some cases, but we're not there yet, which gets to what we're going to talk about later.

There really is a difference of opinion among the two groups that we are hearing tonight, but there is no difference of opinion that we have to do something about gas prices. Now, we're talking about long-term solutions. I would hope there's not going to be a difference of opinion on some of the short-term solutions. We're talking about the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, 70 billion barrels per day beginning 2 weeks from today. The manipulation that takes place in the market, the commodities market by these commodities traders, we're going to deal with that issue. There are short-term solutions.

But what is in this dispute tonight and what we're debating in a friendly way is the difference of opinion that we have about what we're going to be as a country 10 years from now and 20 years from now. Are we going to remain dependent on oil? And yes, we're talking in this case about domestic oil. About 65 percent of the oil we get in this country is from overseas. We import it from countries that do not have good will towards Americans in many cases.

So what happens if we drill in ANWR and the 20 percent that remains of the oil that's known in the Outer Continental Shelf where we're not allowed to drill? Eighty percent is already in areas where we are allowed to drill, so what happens if we allow and get to peak capacity 20 years from now? We might be down to 55 percent, we might be down to 52 percent. We're still going to have a majority of our oil that we import from other countries. We're going to feed the beast for the next 20 years and we're going to be in the same place then as we are now.

So is that where we want to be? We have a decision to make as a Nation on how to spend the next 10 to 20 years. How do we want to use all the resources of this Nation and all the brain power of this Nation? Do we want to focus it on continuing our dependence on oil, or do we want to focus it on alternative sources of energy? We're going to talk about that, but I know the gentleman wants to continue along this track, so I will yield back to him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And one of the issues that was brought up today by the President that we want to discuss—and I very much appreciate you making the presentation as to the other side of the debate that our friends made over the last hour. But a couple of the points that were made on the other side is that, well, if we go offshore, you go into the Outer Continental Shelf region, it's deep water, it's going to cost $2 billion just to maybe get into the well. Well, when you look into the profits from 2007 for the oil companies, $123 billion in profits last year. So the reason they give that they have to increase the price is because it is expensive to get into some of this deep water; no one is disputing that fact.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Can I talk about the $2 billion figure?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Sure.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Because I don't want you to lose the train of thought on that one.

The $2 billion figure includes the surveying and the geological work to actually find the oil in the first place, which it's not just drilling, the $2 billion is from start to peak production.

The point of the 68 million acres is we already know there's oil there. We already know where it is. They purchased the lease specifically because there is oil known to be in those lands, and they're making a conscious decision not to drill there. So the $2 billion actually supports our argument. It doesn't hurt our argument, it supports it, that there is work that needs to be done in any new lands that we make available that we've already done in the current 68 million acres that are available. That's what that $2 billion does.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Much of this money has already been spent in the surveying and the geological work. So now you have, last year, $123 billion in profits. That's what you get the money for because you say it's expensive to get in there. So you're making all the profits and not necessarily going in to get the oil.

And then another comment earlier was made, well, it may take 7 years. Well, if you go to ANWR, you're not going to get a drop out for 10 years. And in 20 years—and I love how this ANWR has just become the silver bullet. If you go into ANWR today, or

even if you did go into ANWR in 1995, Madam Speaker, that will only save you, after 20 years of, when ANWR gets to peak production, it will save 1.8 cents per gallon of gas, period, at peak production.

ANWR is not a silver bullet. And if ANWR were the silver bullet, the gentleman from Pennsylvania and I would be standing on top of this Capitol waving the ANWR flag saying, this is all we need to do in America is to go to ANWR and pull out this oil that's there. And so I think it's misleading, Madam Speaker, for the President to come before the American people and say that this ANWR is a major component of us reducing our dependency on foreign oil.

□ 1945

Mr. ALTMIRE. It is instructive to look at the acreage of ANWR that we are talking about. We are talking about 200,000 acres of land in ANWR that they want to make available for drilling. So we would go from 68 million acres that are currently available for drilling to 68.2 acres. That is the significance of ANWR—68 million to 68.2 acres.

And the gentleman makes a good point about the political argument. Many Members of Congress are not like this, but I think it is fair to say there are a number of people that would draw the conclusion that they want to return home, and they want to give good news to their constituents about what they are doing on gas prices, and if there were a quick fix, if there were a way that we could return home to our constituents and say, we found the magic bullet, we are going to lower gas prices by 40 percent or 50 percent. I think it is pretty safe to say we could round up a majority in Congress if there were an immediate fix to this problem that we would do it. There is not an immediate fix. So what we have here is a discussion, a friendly debate, on what the future is, and again whether to stick with oil, or whether to go to alternative energy.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And we're not getting this information, unlike has been proposed in some places that this is all coming from the Sierra Club, that all this information is coming from the League of Conservation Voters or some left-wing, liberal political group that doesn't care about energy and wants us all to move to a commune and then we'll all be fine. This is coming from the Department of Energy. These ANWR statistics are coming from the Department of Energy. And the Department of Energy is the executive branch, which is run by George W. Bush. These are the President's own people telling us from the Energy Information Administration of what exactly the numbers are. We are not making this up.

So on one side he comes out and says, ''We need to drill in ANWR. That is a major component of our energy policy.'' And his own energy people are saying, ''In 20 years it will save you 2 cents a gallon.'' Now many of our colleagues here have said, ''We are Americans. This is America.'' Well, the America that I know doesn't say, ''We are going to really do it and save 2 cents a gallon in gas 20 years from now.'' That is not America. That is not America. America is saying, ''We are going to be energy independent.''

The problem with our friends and the disagreement that we have with the President and with our friends in the Republican Party is the basic idea that we can drill our way out of this problem. Because we can't. We have 1.6 percent of the known oil reserves in the world in the United States. And we consume 25 percent of daily oil consumption, my friend, and that means that no matter how much we drill, if we just keep drilling and drilling and drilling, we will still have to import oil. We will still be dependent on the Middle East. We will still be caught up in these political games that we are in right now in the Middle East. And we will still be in this tenuous web of dictatorships and who's got the oil and what are the supply lines and how do we keep it safe and how do we get to the market. We will still be involved in all of that.

But what the Democrats are trying to do is to take this money and invest it into alternative energy research and development. This should have been done years ago. And some of our friends on the other side and the President comes out today, it was like the President hasn't been around for the last 7 years. You control the House. You control the Senate. You control the White House. Republicans were controlling the whole capital in Washington, D.C. when I first got down here in 2002. The President got here 2 years before. Why aren't we drilling in ANWR? They said Clinton vetoed it in 1995. Why didn't the President pass it through? Why didn't the President move us forward with the Republican leadership in the House and the Senate with Trent Lott and Tom DeLay and all the other leaders that were down here?

That is failed leadership. We are here to clean up the mess. And now look where we are, at over $4 per gallon for gas.

Mr. ALTMIRE. In speaking about the leadership that has been taking place over the last 8 years, we can talk about the impact that the low U.S. dollar has had on the price of oil per barrel which is a direct result of the economic policies of this administration and the three previous Congresses. Perhaps we will get to that later in the evening.

But as we talk about what the President said today, I think it is a little disingenuous, to be honest, to say that it is Congress' responsibility to open up, after 28 years of the moratorium, to open up the Outer Continental Shelf when there are two things at work here. There is the moratorium, and there is the executive order that was put in place by President Bush's father, the first President Bush. Now that moratorium has been in place since 1990. And President Bush came before the Nation today and said, ''Well, I want Congress to take away the moratorium, do away with the moratorium.'' He could right now say, By executive order, I am going to allow the leases to be purchased, the Department of the Interior to start making available these leases in the remaining portions of the Outer Continental Shelf where there is no leasing available and has not been.

Now in the past 28 years since the congressional moratorium has been in effect, we have had three Republican Presidents, one Democratic President, and we have had long terms of Democratic Congresses and long terms of Republican Congresses. And we have had times when both the legislative and the executive branch were the same parties on both sides and times where it was mixed as it is now. There have been opportunities in the past 28 years, no shortage of which for any combination of those Congresses and administrations to say, ''Let's do away with the moratorium.'' It has not happened.

The Republicans seem to be the ones who now are pushing this. They had 6 years where they controlled the House and the White House uninterrupted. They did nothing, as the gentleman said, to do away with that moratorium. And if the President is so unhappy with the inability of oil and gas companies to purchase leases to begin the process of surveying and then eventually drilling in the remaining portions of the Outer Continental Shelf, this is a key point, he could, today, as we speak, do away with the executive order that his father put into place by his own executive order and begin that process. Because that is the first step in the process, no matter what Congress does. We can't start drilling until all the initial leasing has been done. And that is what the executive order pertains to. So I think it is disingenuous for someone to criticize Congress for not taking action when they themselves have not.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And if the President wanted to have short-term impact on the cost, we have got to deal with the speculation in the commodities market. Period. Now economists are saying anywhere from 10 percent to 100 percent of the increase is from this speculation, so put that all together, and it is 40 or 50 percent of the increase. But if we take care of the speculation and the President would show Presidential leadership and come to Congress and say let's do something with the commodity prices and the futures speculation and Congress passed something on this so we can have short term, I would say, ''You know what—there's some leadership.'' Let's get that done. Let's get it through Congress. Get it through the Senate. Let's have him sign it. And let's try to reduce this cost by 40 or 50 percent. That would get us under $100 a barrel if we

could reduce the increase that has happened because of the speculation.

But he did not do that because a lot of what comes out of the executive branch today, Madam Speaker, is political. And you go back to the war, and you remember ''greeted as liberators,'' you remember that ''we're going to use the oil for reconstruction,'' you remember all the promises that were made. That is what this administration has said. And then it came to the economy: ''Well, you know, as long as we cut taxes for the top 1 percent of the people, the domestic economy is going to take off. It's going to be a stimulant. We're going to take off. It will be good for the middle class.'' That hasn't worked.

And then you look at the fiscal policy where he said, the administration said, ''Trust me.'' And we have raised the debt limit in this country. All of us. And the Republicans were leading the House, the Senate and the White House at the time, but this is America's money. They raised the debt limit five times and borrowed $3 trillion, $1 trillion of it from foreign interests including OPEC and China.

The President said, ''Trust me.'' Now he comes out today and says, ''If we only drill more in the United States, then we will solve this problem.'' But we have got to keep drilling and drilling and drilling. And you and I are here saying, ''Fine. Go ahead and drill.'' There are 68 million acres. There are 8,000 leases. There is 80 percent of the oil that we know that we have in the United States on those 68 million acres. Drill and go get it. But when you only have 1.6 percent of the world's oil, and you consume 25 percent, you can drill until the cows come home. We're not going to drill our way to energy independence. That is just not going to happen.

So as leaders in this Chamber and as leaders in the Congress, we have got to come up with a better solution. And that is what we have done. We took the $14 billion that was going for subsidies to the oil companies and moved that into alternative energy research so that we truly can be energy independent.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. ALTMIRE. And the two areas that we are talking about, the two areas that are in dispute where drilling is not allowed today are the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, those 200,000 acres that we are talking about, and the 85 percent of the geographical reach of the Outer Continental Shelf on which drilling is not allowed. So we will hear people on the other side say, ''Well, there's 85 percent that we are not drilling in that the moratorium exists and we are not allowed to survey and do the drilling.''

Again, 80 percent of the known oil in the Outer Continental Shelf is already in areas where we are allowed to drill. So don't be swayed by the fact that people will throw out the geographical reach. It would be as if we were to say ''the entire geographical reach of the United States'' when we know that there are only certain areas where there is oil. And to that point, we talked about the 200,000 acres in ANWR.

Now, as we move forward on drilling on those 68 million acres, if we get to the point where the oil and gas companies have drilled on them all, which is going to be a long time, and if they do the surveying work and they come to the conclusion that there is not going to be any oil or any gas there for them to take up from the ground, then that is fine. Then we will say, ''You've done your part.''

But we are certainly not excited about giving them 200,000 more acres in Alaska and further development opportunities in the Outer Continental Shelf when they have those 68 million acres still available, there is oil underneath them, and we know that they are consciously making a decision not to pursue that oil.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry. I don't feel bad for the oil companies. They want to go drill here and we won't let them. There is a reason. Why wouldn't we want to let them go to ANWR if it were going to be this big major solution?

Here are the facts of the matter. The green are areas of land that are open for leasing for oil offshore. Open for leasing is the green. What is closed is the red. They have all of this to go ahead and drill in. Go ahead. Drill. Drill to your heart's content. It's already open, the EPA permitting, you're ready, set, go. Go and do it.

Mr. ALTMIRE. If I can clarify what this chart is, it's not quite accurate. It's even a more telling story. This chart shows where the known oil is in those 68 million acres that we are talking about. So that specific that they own the leases, they are able to drill there, and they are making a conscious decision not to do it. That is what that chart shows.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. This is not Sierra Club. This is the Minerals Management Service within the Department of the Interior. This is not us making this up. The 30 Somethings, we're big on the third-party validators.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Right. And the Department of the Interior is part of the executive branch run by President Bush.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Now here, does drilling lower gas prices? Okay. So the red here are drilling permits that have been issued from 1994. The blue are the wells that have been drilled. So you see that the permits have increased, especially in the last few years. The red are the permits. The blue are the wells that have been drilled and the wells that have not been drilled as to the permitting. So with all of this going on, the price of gas has skyrocketed, commodities issues and a lot of other things going on here. But what we are saying is, you have all of these permits to drill where the executive branch, President Bush's executive branch, is telling us that this is where the oil is, and the oil companies have found the oil there and got the permits and did the studies as you have pointed out earlier. And they have all this room here to dig, to drill, to pull the rigs up and to do everything that they have to do. And this is where you could pull out where these leases are, 4.8 million barrels of oil a day. In ANWR, it is how many barrels of oil a day?

Mr. ALTMIRE. In 20 years it will be 800,000 barrels per day. In 10 years it will be 40,000.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And that would save you 2 cents.

Mr. ALTMIRE. In a worldwide market of 86 million barrels a day, less than 1 percent of the worldwide market.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. It would be very little impact. I tell my constituents this all the time when we are chatting, if there is a politician that has one silver bullet, if we just do this, that all of these problems are going to go away, be very, very, very skeptical.

□ 2000

We grow up learning, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. The oil companies are spending a lot of money, I'm sure, through Internet traffic, through advertising and TV about how they're going green. So ExxonMobil, Mr. Speaker, has spent—the industry totally—$52 million on advertising about how they're going green and everything else. ExxonMobil, of their $40 billion in profits, has spent $10 million on alternative energy research and development. That is not the direction. So, when we say that it is important for us to shoot the Moon like we did in the 1960s and get into the alternative energy, that's why. That's what we have to do.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. ALTMIRE. I had not seen that chart before, Mr. RYAN. I knew the numbers, but then you see the chart graphically where it shows a very clear trend.

What is amazing about this is that's the whole thing, and I'm going to recommend that others take a look at this chart. If there is one thing people who are viewing this tonight could look at it is the argument that we hear most often, which is simple economics: The more you drill, the more the supply, and the less it's going to cost; the numbers are going to come down.

This chart, which is using numbers from this administration, does not lie. It's exactly the opposite. Gas prices continue to skyrocket despite the fact there has been an exponential increase in the number of wells that have been drilled and in the number of permits that have been issued. This is really an amazing chart, and I hope that the gentleman will leave it up there so folks can look at it while he talks, but it completely dispels the argument on the other side that this is totally about drilling for more oil and that that's

going to guarantee that prices will come down. We are drilling for more oil. We are issuing more permits by the thousands. Gas prices continue to skyrocket and to be at an all-time high.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. So that's what we're saying, and that's what the whole new direction of Congress has been about, which is, when you're making these decisions, you have to base your public policy decisions on the facts. When the facts say this, that no matter how much you're drilling and you're not keeping up for whatever reason and you only have not even 2 percent of the total oil in the world that is in the United States, 1.6 percent, and you're consuming 25 percent, any businessperson who is sitting in our seat here, looking at these facts, would say we've got a problem. We can't keep drilling.

You know, maybe we need to drill now and do what we can in the short term, but this is no long-term solution. This is clearly a problem that we have for our country. So, nuclear, biodiesel, wind, coal to liquid, whatever the case may be, those are the directions in which we need to move.

Now, a lot of folks are talking about refining capacity, so I think it's important to realize that our refineries are currently running at 88 percent. We are not at full capacity with our refineries. Everyone keeps saying, ''Build more refineries. Build more refineries.'' In 2005, there was a 50 percent tax credit for any company that wanted to build a new refinery, and they have not. All of the big dogs over the last 20 or 30 years have said we have no interest in building a new refinery. They're making $130 billion in profits a year. Now, all of a sudden, we feel bad for the oil companies?

The President basically came out today and said I know we're running down a dead end, but let's run faster. Let's put the juices on. Put on your new tennis shoes. You know, put on two pairs of socks so you don't get any blisters, and keep running down the wrong road until you just smack your head right into the wall.

What we're saying is we know how that movie ends. We know. We don't have enough oil to drill our way out of this thing. That's how that ends.

So let's, please, go in another direction, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Because that was one of the prongs of the President's plan that he put forward today, to continue on refineries, the gentleman mentioned that the CEOs of the oil companies, who annually come before Congress and tell their stories and justify their exorbitant profits—and this is not a slight on them. This is just what they say—say they are not interested in building more refineries.

The President and Members on the other side will say, well, we haven't built a new refinery in 30 years.

That's absolutely true, but what we have done a lot is expand the existing capacity of current refineries because that's what these oil executives have said in their testimony that they're a lot more interested in doing. It's a lot more cost effective for them to expand the capacity of already existing refineries than to build new ones and to go through all that's necessary to do that. So we have increased refinery capacity in this country over the last 30 years. That has gone up—that has not decreased—while the number of refineries has gone down.

So, for the President to say, well, we've not built a new refinery in 30 years, there are a couple of things. One is we've increased capacity, but more importantly, as the gentleman has said, 88 percent of the current capacity of the refineries is being used. Why would we look at building more refineries? Why would that be such an important part of the plan if we're only using 88 percent of the current refineries' capacity? So it makes no sense for that to be the major part of your plan that you put forward.

I would suggest to anyone who is listening that, if you are expanding the capacity of refineries and you're still not operating at full capacity—you're only at 88 percent—it's probably not the best time to talk about building more refineries. It's probably not where you want to go.

So, as we continue to talk about this issue moving forward, I would suggest to the gentleman from Ohio that we talk about facts, because you hear the slogan many times: You're entitled to your own opinion. You're not entitled to your own facts.

Remember the facts: There are 68 million acres where we're currently allowed to drill where we know there's oil. The price of gas has skyrocketed despite the fact that we have exponentially increased in the last several years both the number of drilling permits that have been issued and the number of wells that have been drilled. We have greatly expanded our drilling in this country, and gas prices continue to skyrocket.

There are 200,000 acres in ANWR that we're talking about that are in dispute. If we made that available to come on line in order to drill for more oil, that would bring up the total number of acres in this country that are available for oil drilling from 68 million to 68.2 million. In 10 years, we would get approximately 40,000 barrels. In 20 years, it would be 800,000 barrels, which, according to President Bush's own Department of Energy, would reduce the price of gas by less than 2 cents. So, when you add all of these factors up, I would suggest that we can't drill our way out of this problem.

I know the gentleman is going to move on to talk about the Outer Continental Shelf, and at this point, I would yield back to him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Well, we have other illustrative charts here. This is the Outer Continental Shelf: The acres that have been leased and the acres producing. So this is in the Outer Continental Shelf already, 44 million acres, and only 10.5 million acres are being utilized. That's in the Outer Continental Shelf. It just helps. You read it, but it helps. These are statistics that are coming from the Energy Department. These aren't things that we're making up.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Before the gentleman moves on and if he could keep the acres chart up, if the other side were here, they would certainly say, well, we're talking about 44 million acres, but if you're drilling dry holes, you're not going to continue to do that; you're only going to drill where there's oil.

These are acres the oil companies and gas companies, themselves, purchased. Nobody forced them into it. Nobody twisted their arms. They sought these acres because they knew there was oil and gas underneath them. They're not randomly chosen. There are 44 million acres where we know there's oil and gas. That's why the oil and gas companies made a conscious decision to purchase the leases, so that they could have them because they know there's oil and gas underneath. These are not lands and parts of the Outer Continental Shelf where there is no oil or gas. That is simply incorrect.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I'm sure the oil companies spent a good deal of money to identify the area. They hired a lot of geologists whom, I'm sure, they have working for them. They spent a lot of money and used a lot of technology to identify this.

But this is the area that is underdeveloped, and the President comes out and says ignore all of this, and go to ANWR or do this, which is not even being done now, and then go to ANWR. There are 4.8 million barrels of oil that would come out of this per day at maximum production and, in ANWR, 800,000. This is the Outer Continental Shelf and this is onshore. It's the same kind of situation: 47 million. Only 13.2 acres that are actually in production right now. Again, there is the number of permits.

It's interesting because we kind of went through this a few years back. You'd hear testimony from executives, and you'd hear about supply and demand. Then with the situation dealing with Enron, all of a sudden, it was not supply and demand. All of a sudden, it was all this manipulation that was going on.

Our job here is to oversee what is going on in the markets and figure out how we can make sure that everything is above board, that everything is legal.

Now, a few weeks ago on a Friday, the increase in the cost of a barrel of oil was more than a whole barrel of oil cost 10 years prior to. Something funny is going on here, and I think we need to move with the commodities issue. We've already done the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We've already passed out of the House that which deals with the cartels. These are steps that we are taking, but if we don't move into the

alternative energy category, we're going to be sitting here 10 years from now, dealing with the same, exact issue that we're dealing with today.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Because these are 10-year solutions that we're talking about when we're talking about creating new areas where we can drill.

I think we've exhausted the topic about the number of acres that are available for current drilling. They want to increase the amount of acres.

So what, I think, is instructive to look at and what we should discuss is how we got where we are today. Some would say, well, there's no point in looking back. We have to move forward and start the process from where we are right now because we can't do anything about the decisions that were made in the past. Certainly, that is true. There are a number of factors that affect the price of gas that have led to the skyrocketing prices that families all across this country are forced to pay. We can do nothing about the increased demand in growing nations like China and India. It's a huge problem. It's going to continue, and it's going to greatly impact the price of gas moving forward. There's not much we can do about that.

The speculation in the market is something we can do something about, the manipulation that takes place in the commodities market, and this Congress is going to be bringing forth legislation to deal with that very complicated issue about how the oil commodities are traded and what the sources are of that manipulation. Congress is going to try and figure out a way that we can regulate that in an effective way.

The estimation is that that will lead to a decrease in the price per barrel of oil of up to $30 per barrel. That's a significant chunk. It's not everything. It's going to have a real impact, though, for families all across this country.

When you hear people discuss what the options are moving forward, I think it's instructive to look at the judgment of the people who are making those arguments and what the decisions they've made in the past have led to. One of the issues that has led to the increased price of oil and price per barrel on the worldwide market is the decrease in the U.S. dollar. So what is the cause for the decrease in the U.S. dollar?

Well, two of the largest reasons are the trade deficit, that the gentleman talks about, where we've added $1.5 trillion in foreign-held debt. This is only debt held by foreign nations. $1.5 trillion. That's over the past 7 years. To put that in perspective, when President Bush took office in 2001, his 42 predecessors in the 220 years up to that point had accumulated a foreign-held debt in that entire time of $1 trillion.

□ 2015

So the President has gone $1.5 trillion in 7 years, equaled, and then by half again what his 42 predecessors did.

The $3.5 trillion in debt that has been rolled up over the past 7½ years, $3.5 trillion debt that this country simply cannot afford, so I think it's instructive to take a walk down memory lane for what the economy looked like, what the debt looked like when President Bush took office. The 10-year projection was for a $5.5 trillion surplus over 10 years, $5.5 trillion surplus. That's what we were supposed to see.

Well, it's not what we saw. We saw a $3.5 trillion deficit over only 7½ years with more to come, unfortunately, because we can't dig ourselves out overnight from the huge hole that we've been given.

Now, what does that do to the price of the dollar? Well, we have seen what that does to the price of the dollar. It's almost at historic lows and oil is traded by the dollar in the worldwide market. That has had an enormous impact on the price of oil, and that has had an enormous impact on the price of gas at the pump.

So when you hear people give their opinion of where to go from here, what are the strategies we can use in both the short-term and the long term, I do think it's instructive to look at some of the ideas that those individuals had and those groups had in years leading up to the crisis that we now face.

The gentleman from Ohio may want to continue along these lines. I would yield back to him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I think it's important that we realize that this is not going to be some kind of very narrow solution to the problems that the country is in now. The point is that when President Bush came into office, there was a pretty good economic forecast, a lot of things were stable, it was time to make some key investments. That did not happen, and the situation got dramatically worse.

The middle class has continued to get squeezed, whether it was energy costs, health care costs, tuition costs, everything in the 6 years in which the President was pushing all of his agendas. I've said this more than one time on this House floor. There is no need to wonder about what the neoconservative Republican agenda would look like, because we are living in it today.

All you have to do is go to the gas pump, get your health care bill, pay your kids' college tuition, deal with the global environment, look at the foreign policy of this country, the destabilization of the Middle East, unable to deal with China. We deal with a lot of trade issues, with China, with Wheatland Tube that has a facility in my district, a facility in your district, in imports coming in from China.

It's tough for us to advocate the administration to be hard on China, to take a firm stance on China, because the administration at the same time is borrowing money from China to finance the $12 billion a month for the war in Iraq.

So the foreign policy of the United States has destabilized the region where a lot of the oil is, and that has not helped the situation. Our domestic problems continue to exist because we are living under the President's current economic policies. The debt burden that has been placed on our children and grandchildren over the next generation was put in place, the $3 trillion borrowed, this is the conservative Republican agenda currently implemented.

We are trying now to take the Congress in a new direction and to move into alternative energy so we don't have this dependency which would relieve the pressure for a lot of the foreign policy issues that we are dealing with, to use PAYGO to pay for what we are spending here in Washington D.C., to try to repair this debt and eventually pare down the debt so that we can have a firm negotiating stance with China, these all fit together. We can't continue to go down this same road. At every instance, the New Direction Congress has changed course from the current administration.

But that did not stop the President from coming before the American people today and asking the American people to continue to go down a road that is a dead end, and that's drilling.

It's amazing to me, whether we are dealing with the supplemental, or dealing with the regular order of business here in Congress, when we try to push an agenda of helping the soldiers, for example, we are trying to get the GI Bill, which would pay for 4 years of college for our soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, for free. They have served this country. We need an economic recovery, we need brain power. These young men and young women should have 3, 4 years of college.

But the President says, we don't have the money and turns around and asks for $140 billion in the supplemental to continue the war at $12 billion a month.

Now, I don't think anyone is saying tomorrow, we are going to be able to pull out of Iraq. I think everyone knows that this would be a process. But what we are saying is why do we always have money for war, and then when our soldiers come back and we want to put them through college and reward the effort, all of a sudden the President says we don't have the money when he has just got done borrowing $3 trillion.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. ALTMIRE. The gentleman is correct. For those who may be entering the chamber at this point or joining the debate, it may seem like this is a partisan argument. It's not. What we are discussing here are simply the facts of how we got to where we are today.

I won't dwell on that argument. I think we have talked about it, but it is definitely something to consider, as we move forward, that the reason we are where we are today is the direct result of the decisions that were made in public policy over the last several years.

When you hear people advocating ways to dig us out of the enormous hole that we are in, I would suggest it is worthwhile to look at what the outcomes have been of the policies that they have put forward over the years.

Lastly, and then we can move on to the GI Bill, because I think that's a very important discussion as well, we talk about the facts of the gas price issue. I would hope, maybe it would be helpful for us to get together with our friends on the other side and do one of these Special Orders one night.

I am sure Mr. PETERSON from Pennsylvania would love to join us that night. I have a world of respect for him and his knowledge on this issue, and he certainly knows it as well as anybody. Maybe we could get together one day with a group and have a debate, not a debate, a discussion on the issue and let the American people hear the arguments on both sides.

I think we certainly would be willing to do that on our side.

But when you hear the discussion, I think we need to look at the facts. You can have your own opinion. You can't have your own facts. We talked about the fact, the chart that is next to the gentleman.

As the number of wells and the number of drilling permits have gone up, gas prices have gone up right up along with it. It is incorrect, it is false, and don't let anybody get away with saying that as you increase the amount of oil that we are drilling for in this country, the price of oil is going to go down. That simply has not happened. We have experience over the past 4 and 5 years, as you can see on that chart.

But another fact that came up time and again, over the last couple of years, I heard it in the 2006 election from people in the State of Pennsylvania where I am from, I continued to hear it over the past couple of years, that China was drilling off the coast of Cuba in waters that were 60 miles from the shores of this country in Florida. I heard it time and again. China is drilling 60 miles from our shores, and that is alarming. That's an alarming fact. Or is it a fact?

What we found out is that China is not drilling off the coast of Cuba, and those on the other side who had been making that claim, some who hold extremely high office in this country, had to retract what they said and acknowledge that, in fact, they were mistaken on that. It may be an honest mistake in some cases.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. ALTMIRE. I would.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I just want to share, because this is third-party validation.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask to have this submitted for the RECORD, all these quotes in order.

Vice President DICK CHENEY:

''Oil is being drilled right now 60 miles off the coast of Florida. We're not doing it. The Chinese are in cooperation with the Cuban government.'' That was June 12.

Minority Leader BOEHNER:

''Right at this moment, some 60 miles or less off the coast of Key West, Florida, China has the green light to drill for oil in order to lower energy costs in that country. Do Congressional Democrats really trust the Chinese that much more than Americans?'' That was from June 11 of this year.

Minority Whip ROY BLUNT:

''Even China recognizes that oil and natural gas is readily available off our shores; thanks to Fidel Castro, they've been given a permit to drill for oil 45 miles from the Florida Keys. U.S. energy producers can't go there, and that's because our Congress won't let them.'' That was also on June 11.

But then, as you stated earlier, Congressional Research Service says, facts, third-party validator, nonpartisan Congressional Research Service:

''While there has been some concern about China's potential involvement in offshore deepwater oil projects, to date its involvement in Cuba's oil sector has been focused on onshore extraction in Pinar del Rio province through its state-run China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation (Sinopec).''

From the Miami Herald, they had a quote from Jorge Pinon, an energy expert at the University of Miami:

''China is not drilling in Cuba's Gulf of Mexico waters, period.'' This gentleman, from Miami's Center for Hemispheric Policy, who supports oil and gas exploration, said he met with several congressional offices Wednesday about the China-Cuba connection. He said he told them: ''If you guys want to use this as a scare tactic to lift the moratorium on drilling off the west coast of Florida, at least be factual, be correct. They didn't do their homework.''

June 12, 2008

REPUBLICANS USE SCARE TACTICS TO PROMOTE FAILED ''DRILL & VETO'' ENERGY POLICIES OF THE PAST; GOP CLAIMS CHINA IS DRILLING FOR OIL OFF FLORIDA'S COAST PROVEN FALSE

American families and businesses are struggling to keep up with skyrocketing gas prices—now averaging a record high of $4.06 per gallon across the country. Instead of working with Democrats to pass legislation addressing high energy costs and moving America to energy independence, Congressional Republicans are spreading scare tactics and proven falsehoods to push their failed ''drill and veto'' energy policies of the past.

Republican leaders—including Vice President Cheney—have recently claimed that China is drilling for oil off the coast of Cuba ''60 miles off the coast of Florida.'' But the facts show China does not have a deepwater drilling contract in Cuba.

From the Congressional Research Service:

''While there has been some concern about China's potential involvement in offshore deepwater oil projects, to date its involvement in Cuba's oil sector has been focused on onshore oil extraction in Pinar del Rio province through its state-run China Petroleum and Chemical Corporation. (Sinopec)'' [CRS, 2/29/08]

From today's Miami Herald:

''China is not drilling in Cuba's Gulf of Mexico waters, period. . . .,'' said Jorge Piñon, an energy expert at the University of Miami's Center for Hemispheric Policy. . . .

''Piñon, who supports oil and gas exploration, said he met with several congressional offices Wednesday about the China-Cuba connection. He said he told them: 'If you guys want to use this as a scare tactic to lift the moratorium on drilling off the west coast of Florida, at least be factual, be correct.' They didn't do their homework.'' [6/12/08]

The New Direction Congress is committed to bringing real relief to those feeling the pinch from high gas and diesel prices and ensuring the needs of families and businesses are put before the interests of Big Oil. The American people deserve the truth and a cleaner, greener, more energy efficient future.

Republican Scare Quotes:

Vice President Dick Cheney:

''[O]il is being drilled right now 60 miles off the coast of Florida. We're not doing it. The Chinese are in cooperation with the Cuban government.'' [6/12/08]

Minority Leader John Boehner:

''Right at this moment, some 60 miles or less off the coast of Key West, Florida, China has the green light to drill for oil in order to lower energy costs in that country . . . Do congressional Democrats really trust the Chinese that much more than Americans?'' [6/11/08]

Minority Whip Roy Blunt:

''Even China recognizes that oil and natural gas is readily available off our shores; thanks to Fidel Castro, they've been given a permit to drill for oil 45 miles from the Florida Keys. U.S. energy producers can't go there, and that's because our Congress won't let them.'' [6/11/08]

Rep. George Radanovich (R–California):

''Florida, for example, has objected to U.S. oil exploration off its coast. But China, thanks to a lease issued by Cuba, is drilling for oil just 50 miles off Florida's coast. America's offshore drilling policy amounts to a government handout of U.S. natural resources to foreign countries in the name of environmental protection.'' [6/10/08]

Mr. ALTMIRE. That's the point that we are talking about. We are talking about facts. We can have a debate. We can have a discussion. There are clear differences of opinion. We are all on the same side. We all want to see gas prices lowered both in the short term and the long term. There is no animosity. This is not a game of gotcha.

It's unfortunate what happened to some of the individuals that you mentioned who put forward with great confidence a fact that turned out not to be true. But the point we are making is not gotcha. The point we are making is consider the history of the commentary that you hear from people, consider the factual basis which does not support their argument and consider the outcomes of the policies that they have put forward over the past 7 and 8 years, and that's leading us to where we are today. That's what we are talking about.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. That's exactly correct. That lets the facts speak for themselves. That's why we always have third-party validators and, as we stated earlier, go back to the war. Now you

have the President's former press secretary talking about what really happened:

''We're going to be able to use the oil for reconstruction.''

''We're going to be greeted as liberators.''

''We had nothing to do with outing a CIA agent.''

''If we just keep cutting taxes for rich people, the middle class will at some point benefit, and we will stimulate the whole economy.''

''The tax cuts lead to more revenue.''

Is that why we borrowed $3 trillion over the last 3 years?

And now it's if we just drill more, we're going to reduce the cost of gas, which is not the case. Or if we just drill in ANWR, we're going to significantly reduce the cost of gas. Then it was in the last week or two, China's right off the coast of Cuba stealing it from us. We should be there. Not true.

All of these have not been true, and now the same gentlemen who provided all of those arguments and used the bully pulpit to provide all those arguments are now saying, let's just keep going down the wrong road.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Well, that's it. I think the gentleman hit the nail on the head. I don't know what more we could add on this issue.

Could I inquire to the Chair how much time we have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SPACE). The gentleman has 8 minutes.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Well, if we could talk for a minute about the GI Bill, as the gentleman mentioned, there is no group that should stand ahead of our Nation's veterans when it comes time to making policy decisions, plain and simple. I think most people in this Chamber would agree with that.

So what has this Congress done recently to help our Nation's veterans? Well, last year we had the largest increase in the 77-year history of the VA, health system funding increase. We have increased screening and treatment of traumatic brain injuries at every VA health care facility.

We have extended family and medical leave to cover our military Guard and Reserve. We have covered small business entrepreneurship opportunities for returning veterans. We have increased the capital and the grants and loans that are available to small business owners who served, themselves, in the Guard and Reserve. We have a tremendous record of achievement on veterans in this Congress.

What we are taking up this week, probably, is the GI Bill. As the gentleman said, the GI Bill has not been updated since 1944 and not modernized.

□ 2030

So we are talking about more than 60 years since the GI bill has been modernized. This Congress took a step to say if you serve in the military for 3 or more years since September 11, you will qualify for the new GI bill which says you will be allowed to attend a State institution, State university in your State and we will pay for it because we want to thank you for what you have done for this country. You have earned that benefit. We can never thank you enough for putting your life on the line and the sacrifice that you have made and that your family made. So we are going to offer you something in the long run that will benefit all of us, educating people.

There is a continuing benefit to society of educating our veterans and giving them a step up so they can get out into society and continue their own careers, which helps everybody. And so we took that step in this Congress of modernizing the GI bill because it had been less than $10,000 that were available under the current GI bill.

I think anyone who has kids who are going to college or had to pay for their college themselves realizes $10,000 in today's world doesn't get you very far with regard to higher education.

We not only pay for the tuition at the State university rate in the State where the veteran lives, we also have a stipend for housing costs and ancillary things like books. We will not pay for everything, but we will help. And certainly the veterans who have earned that benefit deserve every penny of that, and I am sure the gentleman agrees.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Absolutely. One of the issues is we have in this country only 300 million people. We are now competing in a globalized economy with China and India and a variety of other rising economic countries. So we have to make a point that all of our 300 million citizens, a major disadvantage in human capital, are educated.

You've probably had a similar experience as I have had dealing with interns and staff members and people you have met back in the district. The benefits that a soldier brings to your organization, because of the discipline, the focus and the organizational skills, the ability to deal with situations that are very challenging, and you add to that a college degree or a master's degree or a Ph.D. or a law degree, you are talking about someone who is prepared to really contribute value to whatever organization they are joining, whether it is government or business. There can't be a better investment to make.

And why is it that we have enough wherewithal to borrow the money for the $12 billion a month, but when these soldiers come back, the President says I'm going to veto that bill. We don't have the money for that bill.

I think of all of the issues that you mentioned earlier, it is important for us to recognize that last year under a Democratic Congress, led by Speaker PELOSI and HARRY REID, we made the largest increase for veterans' benefits in the 77-year history of the VA because as Democrats, we are committed to the soldiers. Whether you are on one side of the war issue or another, we all say we are behind the soldier. And when the soldier comes home, you will have the health care and the benefits you deserve. And we want to add onto that this GI bill. So we have made that commitment and will continue to push for that commitment for this GI bill so we can reward the soldiers. It is important for us to deal with this issue.

All of these posters with all of the information can be found on the Speaker's Website, the 30-Something Website that we have. You will be able to find, you will be able to get all of these. All of these are available for Members to look at and analyze and to get a visual of what we have been talking about over the last few minutes.

Mr. ALTMIRE. We will close it out now, and we want to thank the Speaker for the opportunity to address the Chamber tonight.

Any of the charts that we have talked about, and I really would encourage Members to take a look at them, can be found on www.speaker.gov/30somethings.

TRAGEDY IN IOWA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, as always, it is a profound privilege to be recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress.

I come here to the floor, and first I can't begin this discussion over the next 60 minutes without first taking up the issue of the natural disaster tragedies in Iowa. From my history and experience, I go back a ways working with the natural environment and the natural disasters we have had. I remember a tragic tornado at Belmond, I lived through the 1993 floods, and when my equipment and my livelihood was under water, I went to eastern Iowa and down to Keokuk to help out down there because it was the only thing I could do to improve the situation because mine was not in a condition where it could be helped, at least for a few days.

As I lived through those experiences and as the Katrina hurricane came up and in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, for example, I was one of the first Members of Congress to arrive down in New Orleans. I made multiple trips down there into the heart of it. I have something like 3,600 pictures taken of Hurricane Katrina's aftermath when New Orleans was full of water. I have been on the ground and in the air, and I have slept on the Red Cross cot and I looked the people in the eye who were underwater and still suffer from that tragedy. I am not without experience.

Personally, I lost a considerable amount in the floods of 1993; but also I have the experience as a Member of Congress who has gone into these disastrous areas in the world. And Hurricane Katrina being the heart and the worst of it.

And yet when I look at Iowa today, and just having come back from the location last Friday morning where I visited where our four Boy Scouts were killed by a tornado and 48 others were injured, they rose up and did everything that they could do. They did everything they could do from a training perspective, and they did everything that they could to prepare. They did everything they could to take shelter with the shelter that they had that was available. And in the aftermath of that disastrous tornado that brought about the four fatalities of the Boy Scouts, they conducted themselves with utter heroism.

I stood on the site and listened to the stories from a number of the people on the location. And think of this, Mr. Speaker, 1,800 acres in the loess hills of Iowa, a very remote wilderness Boy Scout camp location that has been used for a number of years as a training location for first aid, first responders, and survival where the Boy Scouts have been trained.

And the tragedy of this is that the Boy Scouts are generally some of the first ones to arrive to help sandbag and help prepare for a flood or a disaster. They are some of the first ones to be there and stay there and help clean up in the aftermath. They are some of the first ones to arrive in the aftermath of a tornado or another natural disaster to help clean up, and they are leaders in their own right as youth, and they are also leaders in training for their adulthood. And these were the elite of the elite. These were the stand-out Boy Scouts who were there. There were at least 93 at the location on the night of the tornado.

The shelter that they had available to them was small, round little pup tents that were pitched up the finger valleys of what we call the bluffs. It's the loess hills of Iowa. Some of the reporters called it mountains, and I think I am flattered by that. Come see the mountains in western Iowa. They are beautiful. They are about 300 feet high, but they look like mountains on the horizon.

When the storm came, the Scouts had a very short window of notice and warning. The visibility lookout across the horizon didn't exist for them because they were in the valley and the tornado that came first set down on the ranger home, and destroyed that home. There was no basement, no shelter for the wind, slab on grade with a large fireplace built into which the tornado knocked down on top of the ranger and his family. They were trapped underneath the rubble. It was three small children, wife and husband, so five of them were trapped under the rubble of cement blocks and stone that was the former fireplace that collapsed on them.

And the tornado went from there up the valley and kind of jumped around the finger a little bit and set right in on the shelter house that 40 or 50 Scouts had gone to as quickly as they could when the weather got bad. The tornado picked up a pickup truck and blasted it through the chimney and the fireplace and on through the building, and it landed on the other side. The vehicle was about 100 feet on the one side of the building which I think was south and it landed about 150 feet on the other side of the building. That knocked rubble down on top of the Scouts, and that is where the fatalities took place. And that is where most of the injured of the 48 who were injured out of the roughly 93, and that were taken off for medical care.

The Scouts came out of that rubble. Some of them went immediately to the aid of those who were hurt the worst and did the triage that their training had taught. Some ran half a mile to the ranger's house where they could hear the children screaming from underneath the rubble, and pulled that rubble and saved them from suffocation that ultimately would have taken place. The ranger and his wife and children did walk away, although a couple were severely injured. It was a very sad situation with a very heroic reaction.

Some of the Scouts then reached to help each other. Some of them went to the first aid kits that they had been issued 2 years and 2 months earlier when they were on the same location and there was a surprise drill that was called by and initiated by the Boy Scout leaders and by the EMT workers from the neighborhood. They joined together at 5 in the morning and they converged on the 1,800 acre Scout camp and simulated a disaster that very much was like the real disaster that came 2 years and 2 months later.

The Scouts had their training. They were trained to react quickly. Many of them did. Some of them ran up the hill to a storage shed where they went in and got a couple of all-terrain vehicles and chain saws, and came back down the hill and began sawing the trees out of the way so emergency vehicles could get in. Other Scouts performed first aid with the kits they had been issued 2 years and 2 months earlier. They were saving lives all across that area.

The bottom line of it, Mr. Speaker, that the Scouts and their Scoutmasters and the EMTs that converged on the area within 7 minutes, and I would submit that is within 7 minutes even though the nearest town is at least 7 miles away, they saved Lord knows how many lives. But each move they made before the tornado hit and each move that they made after that was as good as it could have been. Sometimes it's just not enough. Sometimes even though everybody does everything right, there still will be loss of life. And four Scouts were called home who will be remembered for all time, especially on that location.

I can't say enough about the job that they did, their training and the EMTs in the neighborhood, all of the emergency responders, the law enforcement personnel, the fire departments, the urban teams across the State, everyone that converged on that location began to arrive 7 minutes after the tornado hit. The Scouts were already sawing logs and timber off the pathways so emergency vehicles could go up. Within 2 hours, everyone who was injured and needed medical care was off the site and under medical care at some of the local medical facilities and hospital. Some went to Omaha, and some went to Sioux City. But the largest share went to Burgess Memorial Hospital in Ottumwa. And those that arrived there, I can just sense the tone in the voice of the medical workers there. The thing that they had trained for, one of the things they had feared and trained for all their lives had visited them on that evening last week.

They mustered through the cause and provided the best quality medical care possible and took care of the patients, the 20 patients out of the 48 that arrived at Burgess Memorial in Ottumwa, and also Mercy Hospital in Sioux City and down into Council Bluffs and Omaha. Everyone stepped up to the task. I think they can be very proud of the way that they reacted to a tragedy, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2045

And it is a tragedy that will be remembered in Boy Scout lore for all time. If there is a silver lining behind this cloud, the silver lining is that the training that they had, the deja vu experience that was visited upon them last week was one that had a maximum amount of training available. And one of the Scouts said, I think, the most heroic thing when he said, if this had to happen anywhere, it was a good thing that it happened here where we were trained to deal with it. That's a courageous statement, Mr. Speaker. And I can't attribute that because I don't actually know the name of the Scout, but all the Scouts out there, I think, expressed the same sentiment. And I'm proud of the work that they have done. I congratulate them. My heart, thoughts and prayers goes out to them, to their families as they grieve for the lost ones. And as they put this back together, all of us will join together in that part of this recovery from the disaster, as bad as it is. I'll certainly be supportive of constructing a memorial on the location where we lost the four Scouts.

Fortunately, the ranger and his family all came out of it in at least reasonably good health and are in the recovery mode today.

But I look across the State, Mr. Speaker, and it's a tough battle all the way across Iowa. And we've had more loss of life due to weather and natural disasters than ever in my memory. I believe that number now, through the course of this, comes to 20 lives that have been lost in the culmination of the tornados, the one especially that hit Parkersburg, the one that hit in Monona County that took the lives of the four Boy Scouts.

If you add to a number of other disasters, weather-related, that have come

across the State, and look at the State of Iowa in your mind's eye, Mr. Speaker, we're fortunate in western Iowa that we're not in worse condition than we are. The Missouri River and its tributaries, by the nature of their grade, come up fast when it rains and they go down fast. We've had some severe flooding in western Iowa, but it doesn't sustain itself over the days and weeks in the same fashion that it does in eastern Iowa.

Des Moines, central Iowa, downstream from the Saylorville Reservoir and downstream from the Raccoon River, they've had some record flooding in that area; not as bad as it was in 1993, in some locations actually worse. But for the breadth of it, not as bad it was in 1993, which was a 500-year flood event.

But over as far as one goes east in Iowa, and especially in Congressman LOEBSACK's district, Cedar Rapids and in the Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Iowa City area, the Cedar River especially, but for the Iowa River, the all-time high was set, I'm not certain of the year, but in this flood, this new 500-year event that came back to visit us 15 years after the last 500-year event, Mr. Speaker, set an all-time high there near Iowa City or near the Iowa River that was 3½ feet higher in its crest of the water flow elevation than ever before. 3½ feet higher, Mr. Speaker. And that eclipsed a 500-year event in order to do that.

But in Cedar Rapids it was more difficult. It was 11½ feet above the previous high water mark. 11½ feet, Mr. Speaker. That is a huge, huge amount, a wall of water that has inundated the Cedar Rapids area.

And I will say that we've been through some floods before. And we're watching as this crest has moved its way down the Mississippi River. And the Mississippi River is pushing at some all-time highs, and marginally has eclipsed those all-time highs.

But what we've learned, in 1993 we rebuilt some levees. We built some up. We tried to prepare ourselves, mitigation for future floods, and it wasn't enough, especially in the Cedar Rapids area. It wasn't enough in the Iowa City area. It wasn't enough in some of the smaller town areas and some of the other tributaries, as well as the Cedar River and the Iowa River.

But I want to compliment the Iowans in the eastern part of the State as well, because they did everything they could to get ready. And during this crest and the aftermath, I have every confidence that they have done and will do everything necessary to clean up from it and to bring the resources that are available to them to bear, to pump the water out, to let gravity feed it down, to clean up the muck and the silt, and to go into the buildings and take out the drywall, and haul out the appliances that have been flooded out and redo the flooring, redo the walls, rebuild.

In some places houses are entirely gone, washed away, Mr. Speaker, washed away and crushed into bridges where they were trapped until they could be pushed further downstream. Some people's homes just simply washed away.

We've seen this kind of tragedy across the country time and again, and I alluded earlier to my experience at Katrina. And this experience in Katrina, compared to Iowa City, Cedar Rapids, all of Iowa, tells me that the vast areas of New Orleans, some of those that are not rebuilt yet may not be rebuilt, even after we're finished rebuilding in Iowa.

But I call upon Iowans, and I have every expectation and all confidence that they'll step forward and get this work done, and they'll do it with volunteer forces. They'll do it with contract forces, and we will do it together by using the resources that are available to us in the most responsible fashion.

And we do need help, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how much this flood has cost. I know that we appropriated tens of billions of dollars to New Orleans and Katrina, and I have been one of the critics of how that money was spent in some cases, in fact, some will say in many cases, and they may well be right.

I pledge, Mr. Speaker, that I'll also be looking to Iowa and asking and making sure that the utilization of the resources that are available to Iowans to recover from this disaster are used with every bit of the frugality and responsibility, as if every dime was our own money reinvested into the future. And I will spend my time overseeing this.

I will defend the interests of the taxpayer, and I will protect the needs of Iowans to have a chance to recover from this.

The cost of these disasters are far greater than we can withstand within the State itself. To give an example, we're looking at an initial component of this of perhaps $2 billion. It will go beyond that, we think. And there's not much to quantify it. This is a guess number, Mr. Speaker.

But to put it in perspective, the Iowa budget's around $6 billion. It was 5 when I was in the Iowa Senate. It's probably above $6 billion now. And so it gives you a sense that this disaster is significantly greater than at least a third of the Iowa budget, at least a third of Iowa's budget, and perhaps well more than half of it, maybe even more than a year or two of the Iowa budget. We will have to see.

But I'm going to ask that Iowans use these resources that we provide here in Congress in the most responsible fashion, and step up and do what they do.

We don't have a problem with looters. We only have a problem with how we organize all the volunteers that show up. That's the right kind of problem to have. That's the proudest kind of problem to have.

And I'm looking forward to an opportunity to roll up my sleeves and get into the middle of this, because when you get into a situation like this, Mr. Speaker, the thing that makes me feel the best is if I can just do something, if I can put my hands on some work and just get in there and do something to help everyone else. That's what I think is the sentiment from the Iowa congressional delegation.

We stood here on the floor tonight, and Congressman BOSWELL asked for a moment of silence from this Congress. I appreciate the leadership on that, and I appreciate that we're all here together in it. We will stand together.

And so I thank all the support that's here, Mr. Speaker, and we will be doing our share of this work confidently. We appreciate all the thoughts and prayers and the efforts and the support that have come, that will be there.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I must transition into this issue that is a big and broad and lasting issue for the United States of America, and that's the issue that's been discussed by the previous speakers in the 30 Something group. I will give them credit. They come to this floor regularly, consistently, and have done so for years, and they've made arguments that I've consistently and regularly disagreed with for years, Mr. Speaker.

I first take issue with the gentleman from Ohio's statement that drilling for oil is a dead end.

Now, only here on the special orders, in the rather silent nights after the general session of Congress has wrapped up, can you get by with a statement that drilling for oil is a dead end. How can that be a dead end?

We drilled for oil all over the Middle East. The Hunt Brothers went to Libya and developed the oil fields there. They were nationalized by Qadaffi when he took power in Libya, however many decades ago that's been. It's been a while. Drilling for oil in the Middle East wasn't a dead end.

Drilling for oil in Venezuela hasn't been a dead end. Hugo Chavez is getting rich off the oil they've drilled for in Venezuela.

Drilling for oil in Russia hasn't been a dead end. They're exporting oil into Europe and other parts of the world, and their cash flow is looking pretty good right now.

Drilling for oil in Canada hasn't been a dead end. They've discovered a massive amount of oil supply in Northern Alberta called the tar sands or the oil sands, depending on how you want to label that, Mr. Speaker. The Canadians are happy that they've drilled for oil, and they will be soon exporting tar sands oil down to the United States.

And Union County in South Dakota, the Elk Point region just across the river from Sioux City, Iowa, passed a resolution here within the Primary Day, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in June, that endorsed the idea of building a new oil refinery, first one since 1975 in the United States. Who would have thought that it would be, Mr. Speaker, in South Dakota?

But in South Dakota it's most likely to be. The highest hurdle has been reached. There may well be other regulations that have to be circumvented or resolved. But in the end, it's most likely now there will be a new refinery at Elk Point, South Dakota; a new refinery with billions of dollars invested in it that will have a pipeline coming down from Northern Alberta with the tar sands oil in it, oil sands oil. They will be refining that crude oil into gas, diesel fuel, engine oil and all the other products that come out of that refinery, setting up pipelines and distributing that oil across the country.

Drilling for oil wasn't a dead end and is not a dead end in Canada. And, in fact, if you'd asked the people in States like Texas, Oklahoma, California, Long Beach area, for example, Pennsylvania, drilling for oil was not a dead end in Pennsylvania whatever year that was when it was discovered some time I think previous to the first half of the 19th century.

And drilling for oil in the north slope, Mr. Speaker, was not a dead end. We went up there in 1970 to drill for oil and build a pipeline from the north slope of Alaska down to the Port Valdez. The right-of-way was 600 miles from Fairbanks north. And the environmentalists went in with a court injunction and blocked the development of the oil fields and the pipeline on the north slope of Alaska. That happened in 1970. But, in 1972, they had made their way through the quagmire of the environmentalist lawsuits, resolved all of that, opened up the oil fields in the north slope of Alaska and the pipeline, built the pipeline and opened the oil fields. And by 1975, we're pumping oil down to the Port Valdez.

Now, today, we're hearing: It's a dead end to drill for oil in ANWR, a dead end to drill for oil in the Outer Continental Shelf, a dead end to drill for oil on the non-national park public lands of the United States of America. Drilling for oil, Mr. Speaker, is a dead end.

Where are you going to get your gas from? I didn't hear you advocate that you want to come to Iowa and buy up all the ethanol that we're producing, so I don't know what you're going to put in your gas tanks, gentlemen. Your cars have to run on something unless, of course, it's your proposal that you're going to park them. And I can understand why you'd want to do that if you represent an inner city urban area that has access to publicly funded and subsidized mass transit.

In fact, when I look at the 18.4 cents a gallon that is a Federal gas tax that each of us pay when we fill up our tanks, we stick the nozzle in and we squeeze the handle, and when a gallon runs out we know we're paying 18.4 cents in Federal tax money on gas.

And a lot of us spend 20 or more cents to the State as well for our gas tax. We're willing to do that because it's a user fee, Mr. Speaker, and we're willing to do that because the consumers believe that 100 percent of that money goes to build and maintain our roads. Users fees, drive on a road, you wear it out. You need a new road, you've got to build a new one. You need to rebuild the roads that you're driving on because the surfaces wear down and the grade undermines, and you need to reshoulder and you need to reshape and you need to upgrade. 18.4 Federal cents per gallon goes to that. 20-some State cents in many States go to do that.

But the consumers aren't thinking that 17 percent of that Federal tax dollar goes to subsidize the mass transit of the constituents of the people that come down here on this floor and say: Drilling for oil is a dead end. We don't need any more gas in this marketplace, at least we don't need any more American-produced gas in this marketplace. No, uh-uh. Somehow there is a solution by demagoguing the oil companies.

Well, did they think, Mr. Speaker, that if 15 percent of the gas that's consumed in the United States, the gas that's delivered in the world—put it that way—comes from private companies like Exxon, Chevron, Texaco, and the balance of that comes from nations that own the oil industry, nationalized oil industry, and so what point is it in not demonizing the countries that are part of the OPEC, the oil cartel, but demonizing the private companies that are putting more and more product on the marketplace, helping to keep the price of gas down?

What sense does it make, Mr. Speaker, for the Speaker of the House and other leadership and committee Chairs to argue that we should bring windfall profits taxes against the oil-producing companies when their return on investment is less than 10 percent, down towards 8 percent?

Why is it, if Exxon is returning 8 percent on their capital investment, why would we want to say to them, that of all of the trillions or, excuse me, all of the billions of dollars that you have invested, you ought not be able to make 10 billion a quarter? With your capital investment being what it is, what is an inappropriate return on investment?

□ 2100

Would you want to bring all of the companies down here? How about just the Fortune 500 companies that got a greater return on the investment, Mr. Speaker, than Exxon in particular. Chevron is another. Why don't we bring a bill under that same logic, the logic of the Speaker from San Francisco, that we should put a windfall profit tax on any Fortune 500 company that makes more than 8 percent return on their investment of their capital. Now, that would be a consistent logic. It would be illogical, but it would be consistent with the logic of the Speaker.

It's not the case. These oil companies are helping us keep our prices down. I don't know if they're gouging or not. But if you think they are, get in the business and produce some energy.

But let's point our finger over at the countries that have nationalized the oil. Khadafi in Libya has nationalized the oil on the Hunt brothers. They're setting prices. They're together. They're a cartel. And by the way, you cannot legislate against that. You have got to find competition that competes directly against it.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know where to go in the world with the global demand on energy the way it is that we can line up with a country or two or five or ten and say, Why don't you just sell all of your oil to the United States? This is a global market. This is a global marketplace that has driven the oil price up to $139 a barrel and the price of gas up to $4.08 a gallon, average regular retail in America, $4.08.

Mr. Speaker, I made the statement some time back a year or more ago, So what is the solution for $3 gas? And my answer was, Well, $3 gas. Surely if gas is $3, the people that are blocking the development of energy here in the United States are going to get out of the way and join with those of us that believe that energy should be cheaper, not higher.

But what do they do? Mr. Speaker, they come to the floor and they make statements like, Drilling for oil is a dead-end. Now who in America would buy a line like that? ''Drilling for oil is a dead-end.'' Drilling for oil has produced all of the gas that we're burning in America. It's produced all of the gas that's being burned globally. It's produced all of the diesel fuel that's being burned in the United States and globally, and it's producing all the hydraulic oil and all of the other hydrocarbons that are out there into the marketplace.

Drilling for oil is not a dead-end. Drilling for oil is what launched the industrial revolution, lifted us into this modern era, and allows us to travel globally and do business and see the world. It's an entirely different place than it was when we were sitting on the back of a horse or walking behind the tail of one, Mr. Speaker.

And by the way, the Earth was a very dirty place back then. Let's just say 108 years ago at the turn of the previous century back when it was horses doing this instead of the internal combustion engine, you know, things fall out from underneath the tail of a horse and they pollute the street. And they walked in the mud, and the garbage got dumped out of the windows, and we didn't know a lot about medicine or water quality or air quality. We burned a lot of coal, and we burned a lot of wood, and the air wasn't very clean, and the water wasn't very clean. And we didn't have very much for sewers, if they existed at all. We didn't have a lot for modern health care.

We lived in the squalor of animals and people walking through their own waste and refuse. And somehow, they thought the Earth was in the balance back in those days, Mr. Speaker. And I will submit that the Earth is much closer to being in the balance today. The technology has moved us forward,

the internal combustion engine and the development of oil supplies globally and cheap oil and cheap gas and diesel fuel globally has lifted us out of that mucky quagmire of animal and human waste stirred up in the streets of America and around the world, put us up on paving and moves us across the highway at 75 miles an hour in some of the States on the interstate and allows us to get in a jet plane, and the Speaker herself to fly from Washington nonstop all the way over to her digs over there in San Francisco any weekend she chooses, every weekend she chooses because what? Because companies like Exxon, Chevron, American companies went out there and drilled for oil and explored for it in the United States, offshore in the United States, offshore around the world, places in deep water. They developed technology, and they brought this oil to the market.

And if we say to them a deal is not a deal, we want to go after your profits because we think the number's big, even though it's a smaller percentage of the return on the investment, if I'm on that board of directors, I have to think maybe we should not be investing the capital of our stockholders and more and more energy and more and more oil because the Congress will take our profits away from us. A deal is not a deal with this leadership, Mr. Speaker. And I would expect oil companies, if this persists, to invest some of their capital some place out of the reach of the deal changers, those that don't keep their word that are leading some of the issues here in this Congress.

I also would take us to an issue that has popped up in the news in the last today and in previous days about an effort on the part of some of the Democrat Members of Congress that believe that we should nationalize the oil industry in the United States of America.

I mentioned earlier that Khadafi nationalized the oil industry in Libya. He took over the oil fields that were delivered by the Hunt brothers and others. He took over the facilities they had developed and confiscated their capital. And that is also what happened in Venezuela when Hugo Chavez took over.

Well, there's some fellow travelers here in the United States. Congress, Mr. Speaker, fellow travelers with the people that have nationalized the privately owned oil industries developed within their countries, fellow travelers that agree and believe in that. And not necessarily submitting who the traveler is, I will just say this: That gentlelady from California, Ms. WATERS, advocated that we should nationalize our oil industry.

Now, she is not a lightweight in this Congress, Mr. Speaker. I know her well. I have served on the Judiciary Committee with her for 5½ years. Here is what she said. She said this at a subcommittee hearing with the oil industry present, and to them she said, This liberal will be all about socializing, would be about basically taking over and the government running all of your companies.

Mr. Speaker, an allegation and announcement of a position to nationalize the oil companies in the United States. Take them over by the United States government? That is not just socializing them, as Ms. WATERS said, that is—that's Communism, that's Marxism, that's confiscation of real property in the United States of America that's protected by the United States Constitution.

And, not to be outdone, Mr. HINCHEY made the statement in a similar period of time that he would be for nationalizing the refineries in the United States.

Now, I would like to think that we're a long, long ways from being so desperate that we can't drill for oil as Mr. RYAN says. He says it's a dead-end. Drilling for oil is a dead-end, Mr. RYAN. But if there's any oil coming out of those wells—and I would yield to anybody that wanted to challenge my statement—if there's any oil coming out of those wells, then this Congress, according to Ms. WATERS and Mr. HINCHEY and who knows how many others, would want to nationalize those oil wells, those oil fields, that real property that's held by the shareholders, the retirement funds, the pension funds of the workers and the union people in the United States, nationalize that, and the government's going to run it? How good? As good as we run Social Security? As good as we run health care? As good as we run the welfare program here in the United States? Confiscate real property? Kick aside the Constitution?

Maybe if you're not enthusiastic enough about that as a Member of the other side of the aisle, you might want to go with Mr. HINCHEY and let the oil companies own their oil wells but nationalize the refineries.

Mr. Speaker, that is a chilling message that does affect our markets and does not make energy cheaper. It makes it more expensive. Nationalize our oil industry, Ms. WATERS, Mr. HINCHEY, and who knows how many others.

The statements made by my predecessors here in the special orders about drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf towards Cuba. I listened to those statements as they were made, and I actually wrote down, What is your point. What is your point in bringing up the issue as to whether the Chinese are or aren't drilling offshore and does anybody have any information about whether there is an agreement?

We know that the Chinese have their industry and their technology in China. I, Mr. Speaker, have seen it. I have seen the capital investment. I have seen the development. I do not know if there is a signed agreement, a handshake with Castro, or if there is activity down there. I haven't gone down there to look. I haven't flown over the area. In fact, I would be a little bit concerned about doing so because it might well bring out some opposition.

But my question is, What is your point? Are they, Mr. RYAN, Mr. ALTMIRE, the balance of you that have been standing here on the floor making these statements about drilling for oil is a dead-end, I guess then I can take it that you make your criticism about maybe China's not drilling offshore in Cuba. Maybe they are. I don't think we know. But are you for or are you against drilling the Outer Continental Shelf? Whether or not the Chinese are drilling there may not be material. But I believe that we ought to be there.

We ought to go halfway to Cuba, and we ought to punch in a wall of wells all the way along there, if there's any oil there, we ought to punch those wells in. We ought to get the oil. We ought to take the natural gas. And we ought to drill our way back coming back towards Florida.

And it makes no sense to set aside the Outer Continental Shelf towards any of these States and even say to the states, Well, it's your resource. Let us know if you want to drill there and maybe Congress will react towards that or the President will and someone will come and punch a hole in there and bring some gas or oil up below the ocean's floor.

When Ronald Reagan claimed 200 miles out in the Outer Continental Shelf, he claimed that for the United States of America, Mr. Speaker. He didn't claim it for Florida or California or Louisiana or Virginia or New York or Massachusetts or Maine. He claimed it for the United States of America. Three miles offshore? That's State ground. That's fine. I will concede that point. But from 190 from—3 miles to 200 miles, 197 miles, that's all resources of the American people.

We have to defend those shores with our military. We have to guard our ports. We're doing that federally. The States do not have a claim to the resources offshore. And if they object outside of three miles, I'm wondering what their objection will be. But I bet it will not be to seeing $2 gas again. I bet it won't be to maybe seeing $1.70 gas again or maybe even less.

So maybe, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of solutions. There are a lot of solutions that are there. I agree that this should not be—I agree with Mr. ALTMIRE this should not be a game of ''gotcha,'' but I fear it is a game of ''gotcha'' because I sit here and listen to this, and for the 5½ years that I have been here, it's been a constant mantra of running against George Bush.

I just left the President where he's giving a speech uptown, Mr. Speaker, and he will be retired January 20 of this upcoming year. I stand with the President on these energy issues. I stand with the President on the Middle Eastern issues. And at some point, the 30-Something group, the Democrats, the liberals, the progressives, the socialists, the Marxists, and the Communists are all going to have to figure out that George Bush is not running

for reelection. He actually said tonight that he will be retiring and going back to Crawford, Texas. Maybe watching the Rangers on TV. And I salute him for his service to America.

But you're going to have to find a different person to demonize, 30–Something group, and you are going to run against the new agenda that's coming.

And you're standing here on this floor tonight defending an untenable position, an untenable position that says drilling for oil is a dead-end. How can that be? Drilling for oil has opened up our economy, our industry, and has opened up the world to a modern era.

So, Mr. Speaker, I bring some things to the floor here that are quite interesting, I think. And this being the first demonstrable chart, take you back to 2001, January. President Bush was sworn in to office. Gas was $1.49, Mr. Speaker. And as you can see the increase in gas prices throughout this period of time from 2001, the 6 years until 2007. Now, this was not adjusted for inflation, I would add. This is just dollars. So if you adjust this for inflation, this curve is going to look flatter than it is.

But if you see, this is a very flat curve, adjusted for inflation flatter yet. On the day that the gavel was passed in this 110th Congress to NANCY PELOSI, gas had gone from, by then, from $1.49 in the Bush administration to $2.33.

□ 2115

That was about when Speaker PELOSI said she's going to do something about gas prices, and I think she meant it actually because every bill that came to the floor of this Congress made energy more scarce, and you have to believe the law of supply and demand.

And so as each bill that came to the floor of Congress made the regulations more stiff, made it more difficult to go out and explore for more oil, discouraged the investors from research and development and oil exploration, piece by piece by piece, plus the threats, of course, and the tax increases that are flowing along the way and Chairman RANGEL's position that he never met a tax cut that he didn't want to kill—and to extend any of the Bush tax cuts, which were the salvation of our economy beginning May 28, 2003, was abhorrent to Mr. RANGEL. He didn't quite say so in his first interview or his second or his third, but after the reporters put together his answers and non-answers, throughout out a whole series of interviews across the media circle, the investors in America came to the conclusion that there would be no tax cut preserved at the end of the Rangel tenure.

And when that happened, you can see that conclusion. If you look at industrial investment, you can see that that investment tailed off sometime about mid-February right over here shortly after NANCY PELOSI took the gavel behind me, Mr. Speaker. That industrial investment tailed off because the cost of capital went up. The cost of capital went up because the investors could see that there were going to be tax increases that were triggered in and kicked in along the way.

That has initiated a decline in this economy that's been significant. The decline in the economy, it started with less industrial investment, was followed by the sub-prime loan problem, was followed by the lack of consumer confidence, and by the way, coupled with a weaker dollar, a weaker dollar that has driven up also the cost of this energy. But here we are, gas is $2.33 when NANCY PELOSI took the gavel, right where you're sitting, Mr. Speaker, and today average retail regular gas prices in America, $4.08.

This short little period of time from 2007 until 2008, let's just say 17 months, maybe 18 months, gas has gone from $2.33 to $4.08. What do we get? What do we get but promises, and we get rhetoric on the floor that says drilling for oil is a dead-end. Well, I don't think it's a dead-end, and I don't think it's the whole solution, but I think we should drill ANWR. I believe we ought to drill the Outer Continental Shelf. I believe we should drill the non-national park public lands in America, and we ought to open up every logical place we can and put more energy on the marketplace.

There's no reason to save it underneath the crust of this earth when you are paying this kind of price, because we're transferring our wealth to the Middle East. We're transferring our wealth to companies that are not our friends. We transfer that wealth. They turn it into military power, they turn it into economic power, they turn it into political power, and they buy people off to become our enemies. They buy countries off to become our enemies. Our geopolitical influence is diminishing as our treasure is exported to foreign countries. That's just the oil I'm speaking of, Mr. Speaker.

We also have a deficit of trade that runs about a minus $717 billion a year right now. That deficit has flattened out a little bit, but it still has a transfer of our treasure to other countries where we owe them debt, and this cannot go on in perpetuity. But the Pelosi energy plan is, well, let's take the $2.33 gas—she promised she was going to take the prices down—let's get it up to $4.08 and then send somebody to the floor like Mr. RYAN who says drilling for oil is a dead-end.

NANCY PELOSI, ask your constituents to believe that. Mine are not going to be so easily persuaded.

Now, drilling in ANWR, what does it look like? Here's a map, Mr. Speaker, of the United States of America. A lot of us have seen this map because it shows how big Alaska actually is. And I say this to needle my Texas friends. If we split Alaska in half, Texas would be the third largest State. Well, you can see by this map that comes close at least, if not true.

This little area up here in the northeast corner of Alaska, that's ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. And if you look a little further up here, this is the region that's in yellow that is the coastal plain that's in question.

Over here along this area about in there is Dead Horse. That's mile post zero of the Alaska pipeline. It's up there very near the Arctic Ocean. The Arctic Ocean runs right along here, Mr. Speaker, and the Dead Horse access, mile post zero, and then the pipeline runs across Alaska like this. I think it's here, maybe here. There, the oil goes onto tankers and is floated on down and around to refineries on the west coast of California and points beyond.

To deal with an issue that I continually am asked about, and it's been alleged on this floor that the allegation that this oil from the north slope of Alaska is shipped to Japan. Not true. It was true back in about 1985 for a short period of time because the economics worked out better that way, Mr. Speaker. Hasn't been true since then. Hasn't been true for at least 23 years.

This oil that comes out of the north slope of Alaska, pipeline down here and tankered on down, goes to the United States of America. In any case, that's what would happen with this oil that would be developed here on the north slope of Alaska.

Now, if you've seen an advertisement that says that we shouldn't drill in ANWR because it is a pristine, alpine forest, or they're showing you a picture of fine, evergreen trees and tell you let's not disturb the native area up there because it's pristine wilderness, I will submit, Mr. Speaker, that this area in question, the north slope and east of the north slope, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, is right on the Arctic Ocean.

I take us all back to something we all should have learned in eighth grade; that is, the Arctic Circle, which runs around here somewhere in Alaska, the Arctic Circle is the line, by definition, north of which trees can't grow. So why would we buy a negative commercial that tells us that we shouldn't be drilling in a pristine alpine forest? We can't go back to our eighth grade training and understand that this is an arctic coastal plain.

On its warmest days, with 24 hours of sunlight, it melts down towards the permafrost a foot to 18 inches. It has some tundra there. Tundra, by the way, can be reconstituted. We aren't going to tear it up. We would do this all on ice roads over the top. The ice melts and everything goes back to the natural way. But if a machine falls off of an ice road into the muck a foot to 18 inches down to the permafrost, gets pulled back out, can smooth that all over, the seed is there. In 5 to 6 years, the tundra is grown back. I've seen it, Mr. Speaker. It's not a belief that's not founded. It is one that I have observed.

I've also heard the testimony of the Native Americans that live up there that want to drill. Drill ANWR. Drill ANWR. Get the oil in the pipeline,

bring it down here, and bring it around to the refineries. This is not a pristine wilderness that can't be replaced, but it's not one that's going to be disturbed either.

This is a coastal, frozen tundra about 9 months out of the year or more that has a regular topography that's flat. It's got a few little potholes and sink holes in it. A little bit of green grass grows out of that tundra in the summertime. This works get done when it's all frozen.

There isn't even a native caribou herd there, Mr. Speaker. There is in the north slope. By the way, that herd was 7,000 in 1970, and it's over 28,000 head today because we did this work up in this area in an environmentally friendly fashion. And if it had not been done in an environmentally friendly fashion, if there had been a desecration of the environment, if there had been a significant spill, if there had been disrespect towards wildlife or loss of wildlife, I have every confidence that the people on this side of the aisle would have been here with their posters and their pictures, and they would have embellished it to no end because I don't believe that you believe that we should lower energy prices.

You've finally convinced me after 18 months, a year-and-a-half of this 110th Pelosi Congress, that you want to see energy prices go up, not down, but you believe that if you can drive gas prices up from $2.33 a gallon to $4.08 a gallon to $5 a gallon to $6 a gallon, maybe all the way up to where it is in Europe today at $10 a gallon, the poor people will have to stop burning gas first. But a lot of people will stop burning gas or at least burn less of it, and they will get on their bicycles or walk or they will get on the mass transit that's subsidized by the people that are buying the gas, and there will be less combustion in the internal combustion engine, and there will be less emissions out the exhaust pipe. And less emissions out the exhaust pipe in your myopic mind saves the earth, saves the planet from what you believe is an impending global warming holocaust.

That's your motive. You would shut down, slow down dramatically, and ultimately shut down the economy of the United States of America, the very well-being of our people. The wealth that's created and regenerated here, that provides all of our creature comforts and our technology and our medicine and our creativity and our art and our sciences, that would all be diminished, all be shut down. You'd hand that all over to the Chinese and to India and to other developing nations and let them develop the industry. We would sit here and curl up among ourselves and spend our $5, $6, $7, $8, $9, $10 for gas, ride our bicycles and sit around and say, isn't it wonderful now. Drilling for oil was a dead-end, but we didn't drill. We didn't go into ANWR. We've got an awful lot of oil up there, enough oil up there to produce at least a million barrels a day for a good, long time. We save that all back and handed our economy over to who? Handed it over to the Chinese, handed it over to India, handed it over to developing nations.

Mr. Speaker, a logical thinking nation cannot come to that conclusion, and I am quite concerned that we're not here building together a comprehensive energy plan and driving it with the leadership of the people who have been elected for our judgment and who have access to more information than anybody in the country collectively. We're not putting a plan together. We're reacting. We're scooting ahead of the hottest criticism there is, trying to hang on to some congressional seats but still move us off to the left and hand this country over to the people that believe in green, the people that are extreme environmentalists.

I'll point out, also, Mr. Speaker, I've spent my life in soil conservation. I've built more miles of terrace than anybody in the United States Congress. I've done more waterways. I've protected more soil than anybody in Congress, and I've also planted an awful lot of trees and many of which I'll never get to sit in the shade of. I believe in soil conservation, water conservation, and quality. It's my life. I've demonstrated it. I believe in protecting this environment.

But I do not believe in disarming our economy. I do not believe that this equation that's being pushed forward here on global warming is one that will sustain it. I'm particularly suspicious when one of the scientists that back in 1970 signed on and was a leading advocate that there was going to be an ice age that was just around the corner, an impending ice age, at least one of those scientists that was a leading thinker, giving us the scare about a glacier coming down to wipe out our corn fields is now on the global warming side.

I think history will only tell, and we can't affect this climate enough to make it worthwhile for us to unilaterally disarm our economy when the Chinese and the Indians are building more and more generating plants, burning more coal, polluting more air. We can't put a dent in it, Mr. Speaker. But some of the things that we can do, we can look at this problem, what we have, from a more comprehensive perspective.

This, Mr. Speaker, is our energy production chart of the United States of America. Now, we need to be talking about all of the sources of energy that we have. And if you look around the chart, you can see that this is gasoline here in this robin egg blue color; diesel fuel, here; kerosene and jet fuel down here in the white; other petroleum products which might be asphalt and heavy oils and engine oil, those kind of things right here; and then natural gas, a lot of natural gas in yellow. Coal, Mr. SHIMKUS loves that coal, and I support him and clean burning coal. Let's put that on the market. We've got a lot of it.

Here's our nuclear. 11.66 percent of the energy. This is all the energy consumed in the United States. Actually, all the energy produced in the United States. 11.66 of it's nuclear. Even though we haven't built a nuclear plant since 1975, still, of all the energy, 11.66 percent of it is nuclear.

Here's our hydroelectric. We haven't done much of that either, 3.41 percent for water going down the rivers. We're using that to spin generators. And I think that's a green energy. It's renewable energy. It doesn't get categorized as such.

Here's your geothermal, a little bit; wind, a little bit, half a percent. Here's solar, tenth of a percent. Here's ethanol, three-quarters of a percent, and we're producing a lot of it, 9 billion gallons of it last year, but it's three-quarters of 1 percent of all the energy that is produced in America.

□ 2130

Biodiesel; one one-hundredth of a percent. Biomass; some of that's wood burn, 4 percent.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, here is a chart of the energy that we're producing in America. And now, the number down here, 72.1 quadrillion Btus. Just remember the 72.1 because that's really what's operative, Mr. Speaker. And now, that's what we produce.

Here's what we consume. This chart, Mr. Speaker, is the Energy Consumption chart for the United States for 2007. You see roughly similar proportions of the energy sources that we have. You'll see that motor gasoline is a larger percentage of the overall energy consumption chart; 17.44 percent of the gas consumed; and down on this chart, it's 8.29 percent of our production. So we're importing a lot more gas than we're burning. If you go to the diesel fuel, that number is 8.84 percent of the energy consumed as diesel fuel, we're producing only 4 percent overall.

So if you look at this chart, you will see that the diameter of this chart represents the amount of Btus that we are consuming in America. That's 101.4 quadrillion Btus. Just remember, we're producing 72.1 quadrillion Btus, we're consuming 101.4 quadrillion Btus. So just round that off into we're producing 72 percent of the energy that we're consuming.

And now here's another little chart that shows you, Mr. Speaker. And this is the Energy Production chart set on top of the Energy Consumption chart. So you can kind of wind this up and see our natural gas, the size of the natural gas production on the smaller circle versus the natural gas consumption on the larger circle. We can turn this over to nuclear and see what percentage of our production is nuclear versus the percent of our consumption that's nuclear. Turn this around and you can kind of see.

But the main thing that this illustrates is the smaller circle is proportional, Mr. Speaker, to the amount of energy we're producing. The larger circle is proportional to the energy we're

consuming. And so I will submit that each of these pieces of the pie—I will just turn this over so the coal lines up for Mr. SHIMKUS—each of these pieces of the pie needs to grow out to the limits of the diameter of this circle so that together we're producing as much energy, or more, than we're consuming. And then we can engage in this and change the size of these pieces so that we can prioritize the use of our energy.

And I would submit that this natural gas product that's here, the yellow, let's produce a lot more of it. Let's use less to generate electricity; let's use more to produce fertilizer and use it in industry where we produce plastics, et cetera.

But this is where the picture is for the solution. We need more coal, more natural gas. We need more other petroleum products. We need more diesel fuel, more motor gasoline, more biomass, solar, ethanol, biodiesel, wind, geothermal, et cetera.

Mr. Speaker, might I request how much time I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 4 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's just enough time to demonstrate what corn is.

Mr. Speaker, this may be a first on the floor of the United States Congress. In this Ziploc bag is corn. Now, there's a little bit of a misconception out there. There's an argument that we shouldn't turn this into ethanol because people will say, well, that's food. Well, I have chewed on this corn, but we grind it up and feed it to livestock. This isn't human food as we know it. We do convert some of it to syrups and 299 other products, value add. But what happens is we'll bring a bushel of this corn into an ethanol plant, we'll run it through that plant. A third of the volume that you see here will be converted into ethanol. About the same amount of it is wasted when you feed it to livestock anyway, it just isn't usable, so that turns into CO_2. And that's a waste product right now with ethanol.

The other third of it turns into this; this is a fine product called dried distiller's grain. This is actually high-protein, dried distiller's grain, Mr. Speaker. This gets fed back to livestock. So I'll come down at another time and I'll demonstrate what you do with a bushel of corn. It produces three gallons of ethanol. Half of the feed value in that, at least, goes back to the livestock in the form of dried distiller's grain that I have in this hand. And this food-versus-fuel argument does not hold up right now; it may for the '08 crop, it doesn't for '07.

We've produced more corn than ever before in 2007; that was 13.1 billion bushels. We exported more corn than ever before; that was 2.5 billion bushels. We converted more corn into ethanol than ever before; that was 3.2 billion bushels. And 1.6 billion of that went back to livestock in the form of feed, so you add that back in. And the amount of corn that was available for domestic consumption was 9.0 billion bushels of corn from the 2007 crop. That's more than ever before, Mr. Speaker. And the average amount of corn available for domestic consumption for the other years in the decade was 7.4 billion bushels.

So there was 1.6 billion more bushels available for domestic consumption, the prices somewhat higher than they ever were before; part of it is a weak dollar, part of it is global demand; part of it is we exported more meat than ever before. And our economy has been rolling and booming.

We have to figure out how to come to grips with this. Ethanol isn't the only answer, drilling is not the only answer, but $4.08 gas surely is not the answer, Mr. Speaker. And anybody that thinks that drilling for oil is a dead end I think has a dead idea. And the American people are going to stand up and say, Drill ANWR, drill the Outer Continental Shelf, drill the non-national park public lands. Let's have all the energy and all these categories that we have. Let's drive down these prices. Let's boom our economy. And let's get on with where we need to go as a country.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your attention this evening.

THE FRESHMEN CLASS OF THE 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be here tonight on the floor of the House of Representatives with a number of my colleagues who will be coming in and out, I imagine, as the evening goes on. And I'm also especially glad to be able to follow my colleague from Iowa (Mr. KING), who's got an interesting, but obsolete, perspective on the energy future for this country and what we need to do not only in the current crisis, but for the future of our great country, for the future of our economy, for the future of our energy use.

So tonight we will be talking about what it means to go green. Because, let's face it, green is the new red, white and blue. And before I jump into the energy issues, but sticking with the theme of going green, I cannot help but stand to congratulate the Boston Celtics for winning the NBA finals. And if anybody exemplifies what it means to be green and to be champions, it certainly is the Boston Celtics. It's the kind of lesson that we all could learn in this country.

Many of us in New Hampshire are diehard Celtics fans. And some of a certain age, including myself, remember the great championship Celtic teams from the sixties, seventies and eighties. And this has been the longest stretch in the Celtics' franchise history without winning a championship.

The Boston Celtics last night beat their rival, the Los Angeles Lakers, by a whopping 39 points. It was the first NBA championship for Boston since 1986. Now, Celtics fans are especially proud today of Captain Paul Pierce, who, in the great tradition of Celtic champions like Red Auerbach and Larry Bird and Kevin McHale and Dennis Johnson and other greats, was the obvious choice for the NBA Final MVP Award. I'm proud to stand tonight to congratulate Paul Pierce for securing his place in Celtics history and the rest of the team for bringing the 17th banner back to New England. It's time to go green: Go Celtics.

Now, along with going green, what's important to note is that, as we are here tonight, in my home State of New Hampshire, New Hampshire families are paying record prices for gasoline. Today, the average is $4.04 for regular gas and $4.73 for diesel. Last year at about this time, New Hampshire families were paying $2.92 for regular gas and $2.82 for diesel.

Now, for some reason, as if to rewrite history, the President of the United States and my Republican colleagues, regrettably, would like to shift the blame for the soaring energy prices to the Democrats in Congress. They would like somehow for the American people to believe that it is simply the fact of the switch of majority in 2006 and Democrats who have been here working hard on reasonable, responsible, smart energy legislation, who are somehow the cause of the pain at the pumps. Well, tonight we'll talk a little truth, we'll talk a little truth to what are outrageous scams. It is simply not true.

The President today proposed, for example, drilling in ANWR. He proposed giving the oil companies even more access to drilling. The President's proposal today is, unfortunately, another page from the administration's energy policy that was literally written by the oil industry. I don't think anybody can forget that it was Vice President CHENEY, an oil man, who, together with President Bush, an oil man, sat in secret with the oil companies to create this country's energy policy.

The product of that energy policy is that today, after the first quarter of 2008, we've had another record year for oil company profits. Apparently Mr. CHENEY's energy policy seems to be working for the oil companies. In 2002, the profits of the oil companies were $6.5 billion in a quarter. And today, in 2008, first quarter of 2008, the record year for oil company profits, $36.9 billion in profits, while we pay $4.04 at the pump.

So the plan from the President now is to give away more public resources to the very same oil companies that are raking in record profits; and all the time those oil companies are sitting on 68 million acres of Federal lands they've already leased; 68 million acres of Federal lands they've already leased

and already have done the environmental permitting on. That's 68 million acres ready to be drilled on for oil.

The President's speech, in a time of record gas prices, had no ideas for more efficient transportation or renewable American energy; no ideas for conservation and an alternative future that will actually free us from oil; no real ideas to deal with the current crisis now, as well as looking toward the future because they are inseparable. And we are now paying the price, frankly, for 30 years of not paying attention as we should, and for 8 years under the Bush administration, together with a previous 12 years, much of that with a Republican Congress in which energy policy has been designed for the oil companies, favoring the oil companies, and the American consumers have been paying the price. The President's proposal is nothing more than a continuation of addiction to fossil fuels and dependency on an oil industry earning record profits.

Now, just before I turn it over to my colleague, my good friend from the State of New York, JOHN HALL, who has been working on environmental issues his entire life, what is clear is that we will need to transition from the current addiction we have to oil that binds us to unfriendly countries, that threatens our national security, that depresses our economy, we will need to transition to a future of energy efficiency and conservation, and renewable and alternative fuels, which will explode the entrepreneurial spirit of this country, deliver real security, real jobs, and a sustainable future. But in that transition, what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would like the American people to think is that somehow, by drilling in Alaska, they will see some real benefits.

We will talk more about it later. But the last thing I will say before I turn it over to Mr. HALL is, what the Department of Energy has told us about drilling in Alaska is very simple: Even if you opened ANWR to drilling it would take until about 2025 to see any of the benefits, and at that point you might reduce the price at the pump by 1.8 cents. So that is what the President of the United States proposed today to deal with our energy crisis and the future of our energy use.

□ 2145

Drill in ANWR, and by 2025, we will reduce the price by 1.8 cents.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to turn the proceedings over to my colleague from New York, John Hall.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. HODES. Good evening. It is a pleasure to be here again. I want to just agree with one thing that our previous speaker from the other side of the aisle, Mr. KING, had to say regarding biofuels. I think that there are ways in which various biofuels, including corn, but especially cellulosic biofuels and nonfood crops can and should be used to extend the liquid fuels capacity of this country. But the main reason that I'm here tonight is because I've heard in the last several days a nonstop drum beat, a chorus singing from the same choir book and the same hymn book at every committee meeting I have been at, at every press conference I have heard, at every chance I see a Republican representative on television blaming the Democrats for the high price of gasoline and claiming, erroneously, that Democrats have been stopping drilling, that Democrats are opposed to drilling, and therefore we're responsible for the price of gas. This is not only false but ridiculous on the face of it. And I challenge it as a falsehood.

Specifically, I would say that over the last 8 years, the number of drilling permits issued by the government has gone up by 361 percent. So the lands are open. The oil companies own 9,700 plus leases that they have bid on and received the leases for. And as you say, Mr. HODES, they have got done the environmental permitting on, the permits have been issued, and the way is clear for drills to go into the ground or into the offshore adjacent waters of the lower 48. But for some reason, no drilling is occurring.

Now I'm curious as to why exactly that is, if really the oil companies want to drill. And I would remind you, by the way, that our President George W. Bush said, when oil was going for $50 a barrel, that that was all the incentive the oil companies need. They don't need any more tax breaks or incentives. Fifty dollars a barrel is enough incentive to make them drill anywhere.

As this chart will show you, the total Federal acres leased and in production in 2007 were 91.5 million acres leased but producing only 23.7 million acres. There is a huge discrepancy between land that has been leased by the oil companies and that which they are using to actually drill and produce oil. Why is this? Could it be perhaps that they expect that speculators and market forces may drive the prices up further, not to mention their restricting supply might drive them up further, and that if they hold off for a couple more years, that same land and that same oil might be more valuable? And actually when you're making profits such as the gentleman from New Hampshire just talked about, I mean, how much money can you deal with? How many profits can you possibly figure out what to do with and where to invest in? And maybe it's better leaving them in the ground.

If I'm an oil company, I'm not necessarily thinking in the national interest. I'm thinking in the interests of my shareholders for the next quarter, for the next year, for the next shareholders' meeting, and for my next bonus if I'm the CEO. We had the CEOs of the top five oil companies testifying in this House before the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. And when they were asked, ''Now that you have made the record profits of any corporation in the history of the world, would you commit to investing in one biofuels pump at every station that you own?'' And they said ''no.'' And when they were asked, ''If you would commit to advertising now that you have made the biggest profits in the history of the world for 3 years in a row, would you invest in advertising to tell people to conserve more and that it's patriotic to conserve and to drive a more fuel-efficient car and so on?'' And they said, ''Oh, we're already doing that.'' Which I frankly haven't seen. I watch enough television. I think I would have noticed if they were doing that.

And my friend, Mr. WALDEN, a minority member, a Republican member of the Select Committee from Oregon said, ''I'm a capitalist.'' I'm paraphrasing him now. I don't remember the exact quote. ''I'm a capitalist. I'm a small businessman myself. And if I made record profits for several years in a row, profits that I hadn't even dreamed of, I would start to think about whether I could lower my price to my customer. Have you at the oil companies thought about lowering the prices to the consumers?'' And one by one all five of them said, ''Well, we don't set the prices.'' And there was a chuckle through the room.

But I think there are various factors setting the prices. And one of them is collusion between the oil companies, which is why I have called for an investigation by the Federal Trade Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission on exactly that fact, the fact that when crude oil goes up on the world market, the gas and diesel price spikes immediately with it. They go up simultaneously. But when crude prices go down, gasoline prices still go up. And if they come down at all, they come done slowly. It's kind of like rockets and feathers. The price goes up like a rocket, and it comes down like a feather very slowly.

So I'm suspicious about a couple of things, one, the disconnect between crude and refined gasoline when they're coming down. They're connected when going up. They are not connected when coming down. Secondly, why so much leased acreage that is not being drilled on? And thirdly, why at this time when the prices are at a record, when America's families are being squeezed and hurt, and their budgets are being hurt, they're being forced to choose between food, medicine or gasoline, some people have given up their jobs because they can't afford to commute to those jobs, why at these times are these oil companies and our friends on the other side of the aisle choosing to put the pressure on and say drill in ANWR and drill in these environmentally sensitive areas?

By the way, two of the individuals who have been stopping offshore drilling, I haven't personally stopped any myself, but two of the people who have

are the President's brother, Jeb Bush, who is the Republican Governor of Florida who is opposed to drilling off the coast of Florida, and Governor Schwarzenegger of California, a Republican Governor who has been opposed to further drilling off the coast of California. So you can't just say this is a Democratic opposition even if we were opposing it.

But the fact is that we have seen an increase, a radical increase in leases that are made available, in leases that the oil companies bid for apparently believing there is something of value underground, 9,700 separate leases and 68 million acres of land currently available and not being used. And I suggest that our friends in the minority might think of another reason, or perhaps another policy, that would help us get out of the box we're in.

We have worked very hard in this Congress to try to develop new sources, to provide incentives and tax breaks and subsidies for renewable energies like solar, wind and geothermal and various kinds of biofuels. For the first time, we made a major investment of, I believe it was $6 billion or so in carbon sequestration so we can use the record amounts of coal that we have and still precipitate out the carbon so we don't release that carbon dioxide that causes the global warming.

And, by the way, I would say in sympathy to the folks from Mr. KING's State and to the parents of the five Boy Scouts who were killed by a tornado there, and in sympathy to the folks in Cedar Rapids who are just now starting to pump out their basements and put their city back together, it used to be called the city ''that would never flood,'' by the way, that was under 12 feet of water from its most recent flood, in sympathy to the poor citizens of Myanmar who were struck by the cyclone a couple of weeks ago that was as strong as Hurricane Katrina but came to shore with no warning and no FEMA, and not even Brownie to save them, and in sympathy to the people in Georgia and in Florida with record droughts, and in sympathy to people of the Rocky Mountain States and the Western States with record fire seasons, and in sympathy to folks in the 19th District of New York, which I represent which has had three 50-year floods in the last 5 years, I would say in sympathy to all those folks and to protect them, that global warming is here, it is starting to change the climate. These extreme weather patterns fit the computer models of global warming. And if we want to pump and drill more oil and burn more fossil fuels, fine. But that had better not be our only solution, or we will see more tornadoes, more floods, more extreme weather catastrophic events and more global warming. And I think that is not what the American people want. What we want are fair gas prices, fair energy prices and a green, renewable, sustainable energy future.

I yield back to my friend from New Hampshire.

Mr. HODES. Thank you. And what strikes me is as you recite the litany of terrible tragedies, natural disasters, or unnatural disasters, that have struck the world, my district underwater in various parts of it, as yours has been in the last 5 years, with unprecedented floods, the floods around our Nation, hurricanes, Katrina, in Burma, Indonesia, around the world, clearly, the world's climate is changing.

What strikes me as radical is to attack the notion that global warming is here. What seems radical to me is not to accept that we're going to need to make the kind of transition that seems evident that we will have to make from a fossil fuel past to a new energy future. And in the middle of all this, how convenient it is at summertime with people in pain from rising gas prices, caused by lots of things, to say, for my friends on the other side of the aisle, it's those Democrats, if only they would let us drill, if only those Democrats would let us drill, everything would be fine. If only we could drill in ANWR. If only the Democrats weren't stopping us from drilling, gas prices would come down.

Let me point out that since the 1990s, the Federal Government has consistently encouraged the development of its oil and gas resources, and the amount of drilling on Federal lands has steadily increased during that time. The amount of drilling on Federal lands has steadily increased.

Now that includes the period of time in which the Democrats have had the majority in Congress. Federal lands have been open to the oil companies. They have leases. The environmental permitting is done. As you pointed out, they haven't been drilling, although the number of permits has been going up. In fact, we would call it an explosion in Federal permits to drill for oil on Federal lands, a resource for all the people which, through the wisdom of the Federal Government, the Federal Government is allowed to be drilled on in the environmentally proper ways.

In fact, 5 years ago, there were 3,802 permits to drill, and in 2007 there were 7,561 permits issued to drill. We're not stopping drilling. We're not stopping drilling. What we are talking about, though, is truth.

And one of the questions that you have to ask is, so where is the drilling getting us? What effect will the drilling have, has the drilling had, on gas prices? Well, if the President's answer is we want to drill more, if my friends across the aisle's answer is, oh, drill more, the more you drill, the lower the gas prices will be, then let's at least first take a look at that claim that more drilling means lower gas prices.

In fact, between 1999 and 2007, when the number of drilling permits issued for development of public lands increased, as you said, by 361 percent, gasoline prices have also risen dramatically. The chart to my left shows emphatically, categorically, with no room for argument, that more drilling, more permits, doesn't equal lower gas prices. When you look at this chart and you start down here in the corner that I'm pointing to, we have the price of gas along this side. I'm pointing to here. The years are along the bottom. We see in red, the bars are drilling permits issued. In blue, we see the number of wells drilled. And the green line is the price of gas. So we're showing all three components of the question I asked: Does more drilling lower gas prices? Because if it doesn't, then the President's argument to drill in ANWR holds no water. The complaints of the minority that we're somehow stopping progress, we are the fault for keeping gas prices high, holds no water. And we're going to have to look for other enemies to point the finger at and other solutions for our energy.

□ 2200

So let's take just a quick look. Without going through it all, what this trend clearly shows, as you can see, are the permits issued. This starts in 1994 and goes up to 2007. As you can see, in the early years, with the red bars, there are more permits issued than there is drilling because, first, you have to issue the permits before you drill on it.

Then by about 1999, after we've issued permits from 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997—here we are in 1998 and 1999—what we're seeing is that the number of wells drilled has caught up and has surpassed the number of permits issued, and it's relatively stable through there.

Then starting in the year 2000, we're going to see that the number of wells drilled is declining. As you pointed out, the oil companies are getting permits. They're buying up leases. They're holding onto the supply, but they're not drilling wells, not because there aren't the permits issued, not because they couldn't drill but because of some other reason. Now, let's remind ourselves that they're also making, in these last years here, record profits while their drilling on public lands available to them is lower than the permits issued.

Now let's take a look at the price of gas. Notice how the price of gas basically tracks these lines. So it shows more permits, more drilling, higher prices of gas. More permits, more drilling, higher prices of gas. The argument that if we simply open up ANWR to drill will somehow lower the price of gas is absolutely wrong. It just doesn't hold water.

What is so interesting to me is that this is a, theoretically, free market economy, and this country has always stood for free markets with reasonable regulation because, as Abraham Lincoln—a good Republican—said, the purpose of government is to do what the free markets cannot or will not do so well for themselves.

In our free market economy, if the oil companies tapped the 68 million

Federal acres of leased land, it could generate an estimated 4.8 million barrels of oil a day. That is what is available to them now under lease with the environmental permits done. 4.8 million barrels of oil a day is six times what ANWR would produce at its peak in the year 2025. It's available to the oil companies today. Yet, somehow, the President and our colleagues want to open ANWR, which will take 20 years to get done and will reduce the price, theoretically, by 1.8 cents. It simply doesn't hold water.

The fact is that 80 percent of the oil available on the Outer Continental Shelf is in regions that are already open to leasing, but the oil companies, in their wisdom, haven't decided it's worth their time to drill there either. They have the leases. They have the permits, but they don't want to drill there. So we have the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, a small place up there in Alaska where the caribou are wild, where wildlife flourishes, where it's tough to get the oil out of there because you've got to build a pipeline forever. We have onshore Federal lands available to the oil companies. We have offshore lands available to the oil companies. They're not drilling. They want more leases. It sounds kind of like grab and greed to me. Grab and greed.

We're a nation that has, perhaps, 2 percent of the world's supply of oil. We use 24 percent of the world's supply of oil. There is a disconnect there. We need to find new solutions because the bottom line is we cannot drill our way out of an energy situation in which foreign countries, many of them unfriendly to us and multinationals who are making record profits, control our supply of oil. It has had disastrous consequences for our foreign policy because now you read the various evidence that's coming out about the reason we went to war in Iraq.

I just finished the book of President Bush's spokesman, Scott McClellan, called ''What Happened,'' which is on the reason we went to war. What is very interesting is that, when you read the passages of the discussions in the White House about why we went into Iraq and Vice President CHENEY's concerns about oil, many of the fears that people have seem to be clarified about the reasons we went to war in Iraq.

Now, I understand the motivation that says we need oil and that we need to secure our supplies and that we're going to use our geopolitical power and our military might to make sure we have the energy, but the bottom line is, when our energy future runs our foreign policy instead of our foreign policy and our energy future being tied together for our independence, we're at great risk. Here we are in 2008, stuck in a quagmire of a war with a huge debt. We have a deficit with China. Our gas prices are soaring. There is no way to drill our way out of the solution, and so we're going to talk about some more facts, some more truth and some of the things we're doing both to deal with the current issues and what we're doing for the future of this country.

I'll yield back to you, Mr. HALL.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. HODES.

As you were speaking, I was thinking about some of the things that we can do.

Westchester County, one of the counties that I have the honor to represent, has a loop of county bus service which has switched from diesel buses to biodiesel buses to hybrid biodiesel buses.

We have John Jay High School, at which I just spoke a couple of days ago, where the environmental club has a grease mobile, a diesel car they've converted to run on biodiesel that they made from cooking oil from restaurants in the area.

The Newburgh Free Academy, a public school in Orange County, New York, one of the counties I'm honored to represent, has a solar racing club that built a solar car which tied for first place in a race between Houston, Texas and Newburgh, New York. They were built without the faculty advisors' even touching the vehicle. The adults were not allowed to touch the vehicle. The kids had to build it by themselves. These students knew how to weld and fasten the car together and how to build it sturdily enough and how to make sure that the wheels rotated so that they didn't wobble and so on. The advanced placement math and science students knew how to calculate how many square inches of photovoltaic cells it took to power a certain number of batteries to drive the wheels.

They drove that car from Houston for 2,000 miles to Newburgh, New York, and tied for first place in a race that was sponsored by a corporation that put the money up for the entire educational and research experiment.

When we did a presentation in our district on this, the students came in, wearing their solar racing club hats and their solar racing club T-shirts, and they showed the video of their car rolling down the highway with nothing but solar power powering it. By the way, this was a standing-room-only crowd who came to see this at the Bedford Town Hall in New York.

Afterwards, the adults came up to me as we were leaving, and they were saying, if these kids can do this on a shoestring, with no budget to speak of, where is Detroit? Why can't GM and Ford and Chrysler, our automakers, do this?

I would say that they can and that they should have been, but they're only now starting to. In fact, as to the Chevy Volt, as advertised on their Web site—it will be out, I believe, next year—they're planning this car to be a plug-in hybrid which will have a small internal combustion engine, but it will not be connected to the drive chain. The gas engine will only be used to drive a generator to keep the Lithium-ion batteries fully powered. When you drive this car, they say, on a 100-mile commute or less, it will run as an electric vehicle and will not use any gasoline. When you run it on an intercity trip of hundreds of miles, it will average 150 miles per gallon. That's supposed to be available next year.

I was at an event last week, and I talked to somebody from Toyota. They said, oh, that's nothing. In a couple of years, we're bringing out a car that's going to get 500 miles to the gallon.

Now, my feeling is that, when I was growing up and when we were in the middle of the space race and when President John Kennedy had challenged us that we would get to the Moon in 10 years, in our country, we were used to the position of leadership, and we thought, certainly, the United States has the ingenuity and the creativity and the expertise and the intelligence to be able to devise solutions for all of these problems. I still think we can, and I think we need to, and I think that the solution here is not to drill, drill, drill, and to open up more environmentally sensitive areas to be destroyed.

By the way, it was interesting to me that the polar bear was just put on the threatened list by the Secretary of the Interior. Then just this week, with a rulemaking process that doesn't have to go before us here in Congress, Secretary Kempthorne issued a rule indemnifying the top seven oil companies against any legal action should they kill polar bears in their exploration for oil.

So it's kind of a curious environmental consciousness that this administration seems to have where they give lip service to it on one hand, but on the other hand, they want to protect their friends in the oil companies from any risk at all at the same time that they open them up to all profit imaginable.

Just turning to this chart, natural gas is, of course, another one of the things we hear about, the oil and gas for which we bad Democrats are not allowing them to drill. Currently, how much natural gas is open to leasing? 82 percent. Closed to leasing is this small piece of the pie chart. This came from the Minerals Management Service in 2006. Technically, of the recoverable reserves of natural gas, 82 percent of them are open to leasing. This corresponds with the figures that we've been talking about in terms of oil that is open to leasing and that, in fact, has been leased and that is not currently being used.

I would contrast that with the inventiveness of Listening Rock Farm in my district, which is in the town of Amenia, New York. It's, actually, just barely north of my district. It's a renewable tree farm that's making biodiesel from wood waste and is running all their farm vehicles—their tractors and other vehicles and their road vehicles—on biodiesel made from wood waste, which is wood chips, sawdust, leaves, anything that doesn't go into the furniture that they make.

I would contrast it with Taylor Biomass, which is a company in Orange

County that is a private corporation but that takes municipal solid waste currently from the Town of Montgomery on a pilot project. They separate out the batteries and the solvents and the Raid and the insecticides and other bad things that you don't want to go into the groundwater or up into the air, and those things get taken away and are dealt with in a responsible way. What is left is gasified and burned to spin a turbine and to put kilowatts out into the grid and, at the same time, to produce ethanol. These are creative solutions to our energy problems that, I think, must be explored.

One thing I would share with our friend Mr. KING is that we need to look at a wide variety of different kinds of energy around different parts of the country but, in particular, in the northeast where we have a hilly topography. There are many opportunities for small, low-head, hydroelectric power. In New York alone, the Department of Energy's Web site—the Idaho National Laboratory page—lists 4,000-some, low-head hydro sites, meaning small dams and small waterfalls, where, according to them, no lefty, environmental, tree-hugging organization—this is our DOE that we're talking about now—says that if we just put turbines where the water is already falling at these 4,000-some sites of low-head hydro potential that we could generate greater than 1,200 megawatts of power. That's about 60 percent of the output, the full output of the two Indian Point nuclear plants in my district. That's just for contrast.

Lastly, I would say that I'm interested that Texas recently passed the State of California as the State with the largest installed wind-power capacity. They have now become the leading wind generation State in the country. The reason, in part, is that Governor George W. Bush, when he was Governor of Texas, signed a renewable energy standard requiring that 10 percent of all electricity in Texas be generated by renewable sources of power.

□ 2215

Of course, once the industry knew that that was there, that was a requirement they had to meet, they more than met it, they exceeded it. They had passed California and became the top wind-power electric producer that T. Boone Pickens, one of the original oil tycoons in this country, was quoted recently as saying that he is more excited today about wind power than he ever was about any oil field he ever discovered.

The odd part of this picture is that now that George W. Bush is President of the United States, he threatened to veto our energy bill last year if it included a renewable energy standard in it. What was good for Texas, for some reason when he was President, wasn't good for the whole country.

Now, I wish that he would revisit that or explain it to us, but I believe that the same thing that was good for Texas would be good for the whole country. It doesn't have to be wind everywhere. It just has to be renewable. Some places will be wind, some places might be low-head hydro, some places might be biofuels, some places might be tidal power or wave power, but all of these things are available.

There are test programs and pilot programs that show they are effective. The sooner we start using them, the sooner we can get off this dependence on foreign oil and start to put our economy back to work and create new jobs and the new businesses, new technologies, here at home.

I yield back to my friend.

Mr. HODES. Thank you, and I appreciate the kindness and decorum with which you discuss the change in apparent policies from our President, who was Governor, apparently understood the importance of a renewable electricity standard which would help industry, help consumers and help move us to the kind of energy future that is responsible, American independent energy future.

As Governor of Texas, as you said, he signed a 10 percent renewable energy standard. As technology has developed, in our bill in the House, when we tried to pass a bill with a 15 percent national renewable portfolio standard to give our utilities who generate the power and the electricity we need the certainty they are waiting for, to unleash the free market forces, to use the renewable and alternative energies with technology already existing to do it, that would come from a variety of sources around the country and start to give us the kind of power around the country that could come from renewable and alternatives, but unfortunately it didn't get past the Senate where, unfortunately, Senators from my State of New Hampshire stood in opposition to it, along with a number of their Republican colleagues. It didn't pass.

We did pass an absolutely important, precedent-setting new CAFE standard, which means that for the first time in 30 years the mileage standards for automobiles will begin to rise. We have been able to pass legislation to correct the obsolete standards we were stuck with, and now by 2020 we will be in a 35-mile per gallon standard. But as you discussed in your earlier remarks, the technology is here today for our automobile companies, which are now languishing in the doldrums. These former engines of the American economy, in which some people estimate 20 percent of the workforce of this country is in some way involved directly or indirectly in the supply chain, our car companies are taking a back seat to others which seem to have gotten on the new technology bandwagon a lot earlier. They have simply fallen behind, when if they had kept up with advanced technology, technology that's available now, think about the markets around the world, which our car companies, thus the people who are working directly and indirectly in that supply chain would then have the benefit of, we would then be exporting advanced technology instead of being behind the rest of the world, because the technology is certainly here now.

One area that you touched on that I would like to amplify are the kinds of innovative and entrepreneurial activities that are going on at home in our districts in our State. In New Hampshire, we have a lot of wood, and in much of the Northeast and in much of the cold belt of this country we are heavily forested, have a lot of wood resources.

One of the things that I was glad to see in the farm bill, not a perfect bill by any measure, as you know, in any of these large bills, there is a lot to like, there is a lot not to like.

One of the things that's important in the new farm bill is that cellulosic ethanol will receive much more help from the Federal Government, as opposed to corn ethanol, which we now know I think to be somewhat of a problem. The subsidies were lowered for corn ethanol, raised for cellulosic ethanol.

With all due respect to my colleagues on all sides of the aisle, whose districts produce a lot of corn and have been producing corn for fuel, we now know there are some issues with corn ethanol. It takes about this much energy to produce this much corn ethanol. There may be some byproducts. Food pricing around the world has suffered, so we clearly need to find a range of solutions.

Cellulosic ethanol means ethanol that can be added to the fuel of automobiles and other vehicles that comes from wood waste, biomass, switchgrass and other organic matter other than corn. It's very important in the Northeast where we can use wood chips, and the waste from logging and forestry products.

One of the fascinating things that I had the privilege to visit in my own district was a wood pellet plant in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, New England Wood Pellet, which is one of the pioneers of wood pellets. Now, wood pellets are essentially compressed wood waste where you take sawdust. Then you are able to compress it under very high heat.

When compressed and fed into a stove, it's incredibly efficient, extraordinarily clean at the same time, and very convenient. You can put it in the hopper, and power your home and heat your home with it. The sad thing is that after wood-pellet technology was developed in the United States, the leader has become Germany.

Now, when I was visiting a closed paper plant up in my district, there were Germans who were thinking of coming to take it over and turn it into a wood pellet plant. So we have the capacity, clearly in this country, to use our entrepreneurial skills and use local resources to produce our energy.

The even more interesting thing about the wood pellet plant in my district is that they have attached an innovative system to their wood pellet plant. What they have done is they have brought in a large turbine, it kind of looks like a jet engine, that's housed in a small business, that's attached to the wood pellet plant. Now, as I said, the wood pellets are produced using extraordinary amounts of heat and sawdust to compress it into the wood pellets for use in a stove.

What these folks have done is they have attached their own heating and electricity generating system right off their own building, so they have these two buildings interconnected. The turbine, which looks like a large jet engine, is fed through a series of filters and tubes. What happens is from the wood pellet process, the waste gases and the waste, of which there is some, is fed through the filtering system, gasified, and then fed into the turbine.

The turbine spins, it provides heat first to preheat the heating system that makes the wood pellets. It provides all the power, the electrical power to run the wood pellet plant, and it provides additional electric power which they sell back to the electric grid.

So they are heating their plant, they are preheating their manufacturing process, they are providing the power for their building. They are selling electricity back to the grid all in an integrated system that is creating fuel from a locally produced product that can be used to heat homes in a renewable energy efficient and appropriate way.

Now, if that one small wood pellet plant in my home district of New Hampshire can do that, we can be doing that all over the country in different ways, whether it is geothermal, whether it is tidal, whether it is small hydro, of which there is plenty all over this country, solar, wind, biomass, we have the capacity. We have the brains. We have the entrepreneurs, we have the technology, the computer systems, and the people who are just waiting to have the entrepreneurial spirit of this country unleashed.

To hear the President, and to hear our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, trying to propose that we go backwards in time to a technology which clearly does not lower the price of gas for consumers and clearly threatens our planet, is surprising, to say the least. I asked my friends on the other side of the aisle, for whom I have great respect, because this is an important process, to have two different philosophies come before the American people so that they can help discern the truth.

I have asked them, and I have yet to hear a good answer, what is it, what is it that prevents you from seeing the free markets, which you say you believe in, are waiting for the signals from the Federal Government, are waiting for the standards to be set here in Congress, are waiting to be unleashed. They know it means jobs, they know it means good products, they know it means new markets around the world, they are ready.

The utilities are ready, industry is ready, the market are ready. I just don't understand the thinkers who are stuck in the past and aren't ready, not only to address the issues we are facing today, but help move this country into the future.

I don't have an answer. I haven't heard an answer. I certainly would like to hear one, because what is being proposed by the President makes no economic sense except perhaps to the oil companies, whose record profits will go up even more if the President's plan were followed. They would get more leases, get more permits, do less drilling, let the price go up, and make more money as they have been.

That doesn't seem to be a good deal for the American people, so why the President would propose it, I have no idea. But I don't understand why he and his colleagues, his supporters, don't understand that the future is simply waiting.

If they are real free market folks, then let's go, let's unleash the free markets.

Do you have an answer for me, Mr. HALL?

Mr. HALL of New York. Well, I have a couple of comments. One is there is a bill that will be, I believe it's already been introduced, but we are going to be talking about more tomorrow called the Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act of 2008 introduced by Representatives RAHALL, MARKEY, HINCHEY, EMANUEL and YARMUTH, among others, I am cosponsor as well, as are you, I believe.

Mr. HODES. I am.

Mr. HALL of New York. What this will do, it's called, the slang version is the ''Use It or Lose It Act,'' which would compel oil and gas companies to either produce on those 9,700 leases that they have and those 68 million acres of land that they have already leased, either produce or give up those leases that they are stockpiling, and it would do this by barring the companies from obtaining any more leases unless they can demonstrate that they are producing oil and gas or diligently developing the leases they already hold during the initial term of those leases. The bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to define what constitutes diligent development.

By the way, the backdrop for this, the sort of origin for it, is that back a while in history, coal went through the same kind of speculation, where Federal coal resources were being abused, potential coal exploration areas were being leased by the coal companies, and speculation was driving the price up before that coal was actually developed.

Some people think that, and this is people in the financial markets as well as the energy markets believe that a significant portion, maybe as much as 25 percent in the increase in the cost of gasoline is actually speculation, people saying, well, that's a good place to put my money. I guess the stock market is kind of uncertain, and real estate has taken a hit lately.

Of course, I am not sure which commodities to invest in, but, oil, that looks like it's always going up. No matter what happens, I think I will put my money into oil. Of course, the more people that do buy oil futures, the more the price of oil goes up on the world market, and the more we wind up paying at the pump.

Companies which lease Federal coal resources are, already by law, required to diligently develop those leases. That's the result of this speculation in the past. The requirement has discouraged the rampant speculation that once did exist in the Federal coal leasing program. This same type of speculation now appears to be plaguing the oil and gas leasing program.

So under the Use It or Lose It bill, the Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act of 2008, oil and gas companies would have to either produce on those leases or give them up. I think that this is in the national interest, I think it's fair, because certainly the application for lease of a particular plot, whether it be onshore or offshore for production of oil or natural gas, implies that that company was intending to develop that resource.

□ 2230

And the Department of the Interior has I believe the right and the duty to make sure that our country's natural resources are used for the best and higher good of the people of this country. Not the CEOs or the stockholders of those corporation, but every American citizen, every person in the United States whose future depends on this economy and on the energy choices we make.

That's all I wanted to say, but I wanted to ask my friend from New Hampshire, since you have that lovely chart next to you, I wonder if you can comment on the Republican leadership's voting record on legislation that pertains to gas prices.

Mr. HODES. I would be happy to talk about that. One of the interesting things that we have seen, unfortunately, is a do-anything-to-stop-progress mentality from our colleagues. While they have been long on accusations about the Democratic attempt to move us, to address the current issues and move us to a new future, their leadership has unfortunately been lacking.

For instance, on the issue of OPEC price fixing, the House will once again take up legislation to empower the Justice Department to take legal action against OPEC-controlled entities for participating in oil cartels that drive up oil prices globally in the United States. We are in the grip of monopolies with price fixing. It is a

basic right of American law that we deal with that in the proper way to stop price fixing. The Republicans have stood in the way without any leadership on that issue.

In terms of price gouging by the oil companies, we have passed, the Democrats have passed legislation cracking down on Big Oil that are gouging American consumers.

The Energy Price Gouging Prevention Act would give our Federal Trade Commission authority to investigate and punish companies that artificially inflate the price of energy. It sets criminal penalties for price gouging, and permits States to bring lawsuits against wholesalers or retailers who engage in such practices. The Bush administration has threatened to veto the measure and the Republican leadership has consistently voted ''no, no, no'' and ''no'' on price gouging.

On renewable energy as we discussed, we have been moving towards renewable energy provisions. The House leadership of the Republicans, every single one of them has voted ''no'' on renewable energy. They are voting ''no'' on America's future. They are voting ''no'' on a responsible free market. And on our energy security which we have been working on as Democrats to make sure that we are moving to real security for the United States and energy independence, they voted ''no, no, no.''

So in closing, and there is so much more we could say about what we have been doing, but as I close tonight I want to say to you and to the Speaker's attention I appreciate, another member of our freshman class of 2006, a distinguished member, that it is time to say yes to the future. It is time to say yes to American consumers. Our special interest must be the interest of the people of this country. It must be an answer to the pain that they are feeling at the pumps, and where they know, where the American people know the great future and destiny of this country lies.

So our job is to say yes. We understand that we need to do something now and we are. We are answering the call now. Democrats will answer, Republicans will say no, but we will be steadfast in the special interest of the people. We will be responsible in unleashing the forces of the free market to take us into the energy future that the American people need and deserve. It is time to say yes to the future. Green is the new red, white and blue. I look forward to working in the years to come on the legislation and the policies that will move us into the future in a way that the American people will be proud of, and I thank you for being with me tonight.

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 Mr. DEFAZIO) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. YARMUTH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WEINER, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. GIFFORDS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HOLT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, June 25.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, June 25.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, June 19.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, for 5 minutes, June 19.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, June 19.

(The following Member (at her request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reports that on June 16, 2008 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 6124. To provide for the continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HODES. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, June 19, 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:

7185. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — User Fees for 2008 Crop Cotton Classification Services to Growers [AMS-CN-07-0092; CN-08-001] (RIN: 0581-AC80) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7186. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendments to Rules of Practice Regulations Under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) To Increase Reparation Complaint Filing and Handling Fees [Docket Number AMS-FV-06-0217; FV07-376] (RIN: 0581-AC72) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7187. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Vidalia Onions Grown in Georgia; Increased Assessment Rate [Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0159; FV08-955-1 FR] received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7188. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — User Fees for 2008 Crop Cotton Classification Services to Growers [AMS-CN-07-0092; CN-08-001] (RIN: 0581-AC80) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7189. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Vidalia Onions Grown in Georgia; Increased Assessment Rate [Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0159; FV08-955-1 FR] received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7190. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Amendments to Rules of Practice Regulations Under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) To Increase Reparation Complaint Filing and Handling Fees [Docket Number AMS-FV-06-0217; FV07-376] (RIN: 0581-AC72) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7191. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's report entitled, ''Assessment of the Livestock and Poultry Industries for FY 2007,'' pursuant to Public Law 106-472; to the Committee on Agriculture.

7192. A letter from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Farm Credit Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Funding and Fiscal Affairs, Loan Policies and Operations, and Funding Operations; Mission-Related Investments, Rural Community Investments (RIN: 3052-AC42) received May 29, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

7193. A letter from the General Counsel, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Risk-Based Capital Regulation — Loss Severity Amendments (RIN: 2550-AA38) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

7194. A letter from the General Counsel for Regulatory Services, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rehabilitation Training — Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program — received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and Labor.

7195. A letter from the Director, Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — West Virginia Regulatory Program [WV-114-FOR; OSM-2008-0010] received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7196. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting notification of payments to eligible governments in the State of California for Fiscal Year 2008 under the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7197. A letter from the Associate General Counsel, Government Accountability Office, transmitting the Office's report on a major rule promulgated by the Department of Defense, Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, and the Environmental Protection Agency, entitled, ''Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources,'' pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(2)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7198. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Yellowfin Sole by Vessels Participating in the Amendment 80 Limited Access Fishery in Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No. 071106673-8011-02] (RIN: 0648-XI14) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7199. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator For Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Guided Sport Charter Vessel Fishery for Halibut [Docket No. 071031633-8385-02] (RIN: 0648-AW23) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7200. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Individual Fishing Quota Program; Community Development Quota Program [Docket No. 070717351-8507-02] (RIN: 0648-AV64) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7201. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator For Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program [Docket No. 070718364-8478-03] (RIN: 0648-AV19) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7202. A letter from the Acting Director Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic; Trip Limit Reduction [Docket No. 060525140-6221-02] (RIN: 0648-XI05) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7203. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator For Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Guideline Harvest Levels for the Guided Recreational Halibut Fishery; Correction [Docket No. 080515668-8669-01] (RIN: 0648-AW82) received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7204. A letter from the Acting Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's report on excess harvesting capacity in U.S. fisheries, pursuant to Section 312 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

7205. A letter from the Director, National Drug Intelligence Center, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report entitled, ''Cities in Which Mexican DTO's Operate Within the United States''; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

7206. A letter from the Administrator, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting notification that funding under Title V, subsection 503(b)(3) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended, has exceeded $5 million for the cost of response and recovery efforts for FEMA-3230-EM in the State of Illinois, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 5193; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7207. A letter from the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's position on budgeting for the Lock and Dam 3 Mississippi River Navigation Safety and Embankments Navigation Improvement Project, Minnesota and Wisconsin; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

7208. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Update for Weighted Average Interest Rates, Yield Curves, and Segment Rates [Notice 2008-53] received June 11, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7209. A letter from the United States Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, transmitting consistent with Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, the ''2008 Comprehensive Report on U.S. Trade and Investment Policy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act''; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

7210. A letter from the Acting Assistant Director, Directives and Regulations Branch, Office of Regulatory and Management Services, USDA Forest Service, Department of transmitting the Department's final rule — Clarifying Prohibitions for Failure To Maintain Control of Fires That Damage National Forest System Lands (RIN: 0596-AC30) received June 13, 2008, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

7211. A letter from the Commissioner, Department of the Interior, transmitting a copy of a draft bill entitled, ''Reclamation Title Transfer Act of 2008''; jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and the Judiciary.

7212. A letter from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting a report on the actuarial status of the railroad retirement system, including any recommendations for financing changes, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f-1; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Transportation and Infrastructure.

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 1281. 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. 110–719). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CONAWAY:

H.R. 6289. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the maximum reduction in estate tax value for farmland and other special use property, to restore and increase the estate tax deduction for family-owned business interests, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. HOOLEY, and Mr. WU):

H.R. 6290. A bill to designate certain land in the State of Oregon as wilderness, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DEFAZIO (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. WU, and Ms. HOOLEY):

H.R. 6291. A bill to adjust the boundary of Oregon Caves National Monument, to amend the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to designate certain river segments in Oregon as wild or scenic rivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. HELLER:

H.R. 6292. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to require local educational agencies to provide to parents, on request, information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's specialized instructional support persons; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. HAYES (for himself, Mr. MCINTYRE, and Mr. EDWARDS):

H.R. 6293. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a discretionary grant program for school construction for local educational agencies affected by base closures and realignments, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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 Mr. BOYD of Florida:

H.R. 6294. A bill to provide for a comprehensive study by the National Research Council of the National Academies to assess the water management, needs, and conservation of the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River System; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California (for himself and Mr. POE):

H.R. 6295. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to prohibit operation by any means or embarking in any submersible or semi-submersible vessel that is without nationality and that is navigating or has navigated into, through or from waters beyond the outer limit of the territorial sea of a single country or a lateral limit of that country's territorial sea with an adjacent country, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. EHLERS, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California):

H.R. 6296. A bill to extend through 2013 the authority of the Federal Election Commission to impose civil money penalties on the basis of a schedule of penalties established and published by the Commission; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Ms. DEGETTE:

H.R. 6297. A bill to enhance the ability of drinking water utilities in the United States to develop and implement climate change adaptation programs and policies, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science and Technology.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. HINCHEY, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. FORTENBERRY):

H.R. 6298. A bill to restrict nuclear cooperation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. MEEKS of New York (for himself, Mr. NADLER, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. KUHL of New York):

H.R. 6299. A bill to prohibit the Secretary of Transportation or the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration from conducting auctions, implementing congestion pricing, limiting airport operations, or charging certain use fees at airports; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PEARCE:

H.R. 6300. A bill to establish special preservation areas and rangeland preservation areas in Dona Ana County, New Mexico, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PEARCE:

H.R. 6301. A bill to provide for exploration, development, and production activities for mineral resources on the outer Continental Shelf, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Science and Technology, Energy and Commerce, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POE:

H.R. 6302. A bill to achieve greater national energy independence by terminating the effect of laws prohibiting the spending of appropriated funds and Presidential withdrawals and authorities to conduct oil and natural gas leasing and preleasing activities for any area of the Outer Continental Shelf; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 6303. A bill to amend chapter 141 of title 10, United States Code, to include disclosures made by Department of Defense contract employees to their immediate employers in the provisions providing protections against reprisal for certain disclosures; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mrs. CAPITO (for herself and Mr. BUYER):

H. Con. Res. 373. Concurrent resolution authorizing Frank Woodruff Buckles to lie in honor in the rotunda of the Capitol upon his death; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania:

H. Res. 1282. A resolution encouraging the President to revoke the Executive memorandum banning energy production on America's Outer Continental Shelf; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TERRY (for himself, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. KING of Iowa, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Ms. FOXX, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. FORTENBERRY, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. WALZ of Minnesota, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. SAXTON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. SOUDER, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. UPTON, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. PENCE, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. BONNER, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. MANZULLO, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. COBLE, Mr. NUNES, Mr. TURNER, Mr. HAYES, Mr. PETRI, Mr. KELLER, Mr. CRENSHAW, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. DUNCAN, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. DENT, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. PITTS, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. PORTER, and Mr. SHULER):

H. Res. 1283. A resolution expressing heartfelt sympathy for the victims and their families following the tornado that hit Little Sioux, Iowa, on June 11, 2008; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

MEMORIALS

Under clause 3 of rule XII, memorials were presented and referred as follows:

317. The SPEAKER presented a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Oklahoma, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 42 recognizing the limited public consideration for the regulation of all-terrain vehicles on forest lands, and requesting intervention from the Congress of the United States; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

318. Also, a memorial of the House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island, relative to House Resolution No. 8296 reaffirming its opposition to federal proposals to authorize increases in the size or weight of commerical motor vehicles; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

319. Also, a memorial of the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 36 urging the Congress of the United States to renew the exemption for the sternwheel river steamboat Delta Queen from the 1966 Safety at Sea Act; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

320. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 127 memorializing the Congress of the United States and the Louisiana congressional delegation to appropriate to the United States Army Corps of Engineers the total amount of funds collected from the Harbor Maintenance Tax so that those funds can be used for dredging navigation channels and, where possible, the beneficial use of dredged material to protect, restore, and conserve wetlands; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

321. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, relative to House Concurrent Resolution No. 99 memorializing the Congress of the United States to take such actions as are necessary to prohibit the importation of nuclear waste generated outside the United States; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

322. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the State of Mississippi, relative to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 556 urging the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States to support the passage of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act; jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

323. Also, a memorial of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of The Mariana Islands, relative to House Joint Resolution No. 15-38 supporting Resolution No. 80 of the Guam Legislature and urging all recipients of that resolution to seriously consider its contents; jointly to the Committees on Natural Resources and the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS TO PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 367: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota.

H.R. 636: Mr. HELLER.

H.R. 882: Mr. STUPAK, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. KENNEDY.

H.R. 971: Mr. BAIRD.

H.R. 1032: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. HARE, and Mr. HALL of New York.

H.R. 1038: Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 1185: Mr. TOWNS and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 1306: Mr. SPACE.

H.R. 1527: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota.

H.R. 1537: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 1606: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 1866: Mr. TIBERI.

H.R. 1884: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. LAMPSON.

H.R. 2043: Mrs. TAUSCHER.

H.R. 2260: Mr. WAMP.

H.R. 2266: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 2275: Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 2279: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MANZULLO Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. TERRY, Mr. WOLF, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 2493: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. TIBERI, and Mr. ROSKAM.

H.R. 2676: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 2689: Mr. REYES.

H.R. 2721: Mr. COHEN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. SHULER, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. MATHESON, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. GILLIBRAND Mr. DONNELLY, and Mr. ELLSWORTH.

H.R. 2726: Mr. HOLDEN.

H.R. 2818: Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2926: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 2991: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 3008: Mr. ALTMIRE.

H.R. 3089: Mrs. CUBIN, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. HERGER, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. LATOURETTE, and Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 3195: Mr. BLUNT, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. WELLER, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mr. CARSON.

H.R. 3202: Mr. HODES.

H.R. 3234: Mr. HELLER.

H.R. 3267: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 3282: Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 3289: Ms. SCHWARTZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 3333: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. COHEN, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota,

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. WAXMAN,

Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. TOWNS, and Mr. YARMUTH.

H.R. 3334: Mr. WU, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. ALLEN.

H.R. 3372: Ms. SOLIS.

H.R. 3457: Mr. MORAN of Kansas.

H.R. 3484: Ms. GIFFORDS.

H.R. 3485: Ms. GIFFORDS.

H.R. 3652: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 3654: Mr. CARTER.

H.R. 3786: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 3934: Mrs. MALONEY of New York.

H.R. 4044: Mr. KAGEN.

H.R. 4088: Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 4089: Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. SIRES, and Mr. ROSS.

H.R. 4255: Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. CARSON, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 4318: Mr. MAHONEY of Florida.

H.R. 4344: Mr. TOWNS, and Mr. SNYDER.

H.R. 4884: Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 4899: Mr. CARSON.

H.R. 4918: Mr. YOUNG of Florida and Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H.R. 4987: Mr. GALLEGLY.

H.R. 4990: Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 5244: Mr. HOLT and Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 5315: Mr. SHAYS.

H.R. 5404: Mr. BISHOP of New York.

H.R. 5534: Mr. BAIRD.

H.R. 5548: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5573: Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. TURNER, and Mr. WU.
H.R. 5575: Mr. NADLER and Mr. BERMAN.
H.R. 5580: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.
H.R. 5603: Ms. SCHWARTZ.
H.R. 5611: Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 5615: Mr. WAMP, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. CLAY, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. WELCH of Vermont.
H.R. 5632: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H.R. 5635: Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 5646: Mr. REHBERG.
H.R. 5656: Mr. LUCAS, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. ROSKAM, and Mr. WAMP.
H.R. 5700: Mr. SESTAK.
H.R. 5709: Ms. KAPTUR and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 5714: Mr. CALVERT, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. GOODE, Mr. WOLF, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. ROSS, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, and Mr. ADERHOLT.
H.R. 5734: Mr. KUHL of New York and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 5736: Mr. BACHUS, Mr. BONNER, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. EVERETT, and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.
H.R. 5737: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. SHUSTER.
H.R. 5772: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H.R. 5782: Mr. BOREN, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Ms. FOXX, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.
H.R. 5784: Mr. HELLER.
H.R. 5793: Mr. BERRY and Mr. BISHOP of New York.
H.R. 5808: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 5809: Ms. SOLIS.
H.R. 5821: Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 5846: Mr. CLAY and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 5868: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota and Mr. LATOURETTE.
H.R. 5892: Ms. BEAN.
H.R. 5911: Mr. DUNCAN.
H.R. 5951: Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H.R. 5954: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mr. GERLACH.
H.R. 5979: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.
H.R. 6002: Ms. WATERS.
H.R. 6070: Mr. BILBRAY and Mr. HAYES.
H.R. 6076: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. CLAY.
H.R. 6078: Mr. LYNCH and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H.R. 6083: Mr. ELLISON and Mr. WU.
H.R. 6098: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H.R. 6108: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. GERLACH, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. TIBERI, and Mr. LATTA.
H.R. 6140: Mr. STEARNS, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.
H.R. 6163: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.
H.R. 6192: Mrs. MYRICK.
H.R. 6205: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, and Mr. COURTNEY.
H.R. 6209: Mr. THOMPSON of California and Mr. PICKERING.
H.R. 6233: Mr. CANTOR.
H.R. 6251: Mr. MAHONEY of Florida, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. FARR, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H.R. 6256: Ms. SUTTON, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. FOSTER, and Mr. WILSON of Ohio.
H.R. 6257: Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.
H.R. 6261: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin and Mr. CARSON.
H.R. 6264: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CARSON, and Mr. GRIJALVA.
H.R. 6274: Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. PITTS, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LATTA, Mr. ISSA, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Mr. WAMP, Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. SHIMKUS, Ms. FALLIN, Mrs. BACHMANN, and Mr. PENCE.
H.R. 6276: Mr. MELANCON and Mr. JEFFERSON.
H.R. 6278: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 6288: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.
H.J. Res. 89: Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. SHYSTER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. GRAVES, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. KUHL of New York, Mr. BOOZMAN, and Mr. LATTA.
H.J. Res. 93: Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WOLF, and Mrs. MALONEY of New York.
H. Con. Res. 17: Mr. COHEN and Mr. FILNER.
H. Con. Res. 250: Mrs. BACHMANN.
H. Con. Res. 253: Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. HOLT, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SHULER, and Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H. Con. Res. 338: Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.
H. Con. Res. 361: Mr. MICHAUD.
H. Con. Res. 369: Mr. LATTA.
H. Con. Res. 371: Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. KAGEN, and Mr. KIRK.
H. Res. 655: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr, JEFFERSON, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LEE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. RICHARDSON, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H. Res. 672: Mr. CASTLE, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. NORTON, and Ms. LEE.
H. Res. 1008: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H. Res. 1017: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. HILL, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.
H. Res. 1110: Mrs. SCHMIDT.
H. Res. 1177: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H. Res. 1188: Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. TOWNS.
H. Res. 1200: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.
H. Res. 1202: Mrs. BIGGERT, Mr. ROSKAM, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. WELLER, Mr. PASTOR, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. KILDEE.
H. Res. 1210: Ms. SUTTON.
H. Res. 1217: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.
H. Res. 1227: Mr. WAXMAN, Ms. SUTTON, and Ms. WATSON.
H. Res. 1230: Mr. FLAKE and Mr. KUCINICH.
H. Res. 1248: Mr. PATRICK MURPHY of Pennsylvania.
H. Res. 1255: Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. GINGREY, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. PAUL, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. TURNER, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. BOREN, Mr. FORBES, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. MCKEON.
H. Res. 1258: Mr. HINCHEY and Ms. BALDWIN.
H. Res. 1260: Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. WEINER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. INSLEE, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H. Res. 1270: Ms. LEE, Mr. FARR, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. WATERS, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. CROWLEY, and Mr. FORTENBERRY.
H. Res. 1278: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. GOODE.

PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII, petitions and papers were laid on the clerk's desk and referred as follows:

272. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County, North Carolina, relative to a Resolution supporting the Resource Conservation and Development (RD&D) Program; to the Committee on Agriculture.

273. Also, a petition of the Board of Commissioners of Lyon County, Nevada, relative to Resolution No. 08-05 urging the Congress of the United States to reject Wilderness designations in Lyon County; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

274. Also, a petition of the City Council of New Orleans, Louisiana, relative to Resolution No. R-08-262 urging the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States to support important domestic spending which is essential to the continued recovery of New Orleans; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

275. Also, a petition of the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, relative to Resolution No. 276 requesting that the Senate of the United States remove from its version of the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act, any funding for the FAA redesign plan currently being considered for the New York Metropolitan Area that will directly affect Rockland County residents' quality of life; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

276. Also, a petition of the Legislature of Rockland County, New York, relative to Resolution No. 278 requesting that the Senate of the United States pass H.R. 3179, known as the ''Local Preparedness Acquisition Act''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

277. Also, a petition of the City Council of Atlanta, Georgia, relative to Resolution No. 08-R-0859 requesting that the Congress of the United States provide full funding for federal transportation programs and ensure that local elected officials have an opportunity to participate in the upcoming reauthorization debate; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

278. Also, a petition of the Mississippi Board of Education, relative to a Resolution urging the President of the United States and the Congress of the United States to support passage of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act; jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources.