

USDA Farmers Home Administration is now USDA Rural Development, and Mr. Maufort works out of the agency's office in Gladstone, MI. He has been instrumental in developing a working relationship between the Native American Tribes in the Upper Peninsula and USDA Rural Development. The Gladstone Office processed the first Tribal Loan in the State of Michigan because of Mr. Maufort's personal dedication to the application.

Dennis Maufort has been a tremendous asset to the Upper Peninsula and all of Michigan over the course of his 37 years with USDA. He processed the first USDA loan for a Michigan hospital in the 1970s at Munising Memorial Hospital, and he also was instrumental in coordinating the first Hydroelectric Power Loan in Norway, MI, in the early 1980s. More recently Mr. Maufort worked with the County Board for Keweenaw County in providing assistance for the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge in Cooper Harbor, MI. Mr. Maufort also worked with the city of Houghton to obtain a loan for the Houghton Public Library which overlooks the estuary in Houghton and provides services for the entire county. These are just a few of Dennis Maufort's many accomplishments since he started working at USDA.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Maufort has been a vital asset to USDA Rural Development during his career. His contact with the communities he has served has increased the quality of life for countless citizens in Michigan. I ask that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in congratulating Dennis Maufort on a job well done and in wishing him well in his retirement.

DUNCAN HUNTER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Defense Authorization bill. Despite the 2006 mandate from the American people to end the war and occupation of Iraq, this bill authorizes the funding to continue operations in Iraq well into the 2009 fiscal year. This bill authorizes \$68.5 billion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition it authorizes the entirety of the administration's request of \$542.5 billion for the National Defense budget. This is a grand total of \$611.1 billion to continue misguided policies such as preemptive strikes, interventionism and peace through strength.

The bill includes absolutely no language calling for the withdrawal of our honorable and brave service members in Iraq, 4,170 servicemen and women have been killed in Iraq, there have been tens of thousands of injuries to our troops and over 1 million innocent Iraqi civilians have been killed as a result of the war. The true monetary cost of the war is estimated to be \$3 trillion. Yet instead of keeping a commitment that we made back in 2006 to end the war, we are once again voting on a bill that will continue to fund it well into the term of the next President. Congress has the ability to end the war and bring our troops home simply by refusing to continue funding.

Additionally, I do not support the authorization for \$465.8 million to continue development of the European Ground-Based Mid-Course Defense, GMD, program despite a lack of assurance that the system will work or is needed for the safety of our nation. Congress' continued funding of the European GMD only lends credence to the administration's misguided claims the system is necessary to defend the U.S. from a long-range ballistic missile attack from Iran despite the fact that Iran is unlikely to pose such a threat to the United States in the foreseeable future.

Continuing to develop the European GMD has consequences for U.S. foreign policy. This deal has exacerbated tensions between the U.S. and Russia. There has also been strong opposition by the citizens of the Czech Republic and Poland to the placement of the radar and interceptors in their respective countries.

This bill continues to reflect the wrong priorities for our nation's security. The continued proliferation of nuclear weapons does not make America safer. What will make America safer is to place a priority on cooperation with the global community on nuclear nonproliferation initiatives. This bill authorizes over \$6.6 billion for the nuclear weapons activities of the National Nuclear Security Administration, and less than \$2 billion for nuclear nonproliferation.

The U.S. administration has established a record of unilateralism that undercuts our nation's credibility in the eyes of other nations. The repercussions of this record include undermining our security and diplomatic integrity. In just under eight years the U.S. administration has backtracked on international treaties and conventions. The U.S. has rejected the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, refused to sign the Land Mine Treaty, withdrawn from the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty, unsigned the Kyoto Protocol, and blocked a verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention.

Continuing to keep "all options on the table" while refusing to engage in diplomacy without preconditions leaves America devoid of any moral authority. The idea that peace (the absence of violence) can be brought about through violence and increasing weapons stockpiles is antithetical. The assertion that keeping our nation safe requires us to maintain a pre-emptive strike policy is built on a foundation of fear and continues to drive Americans further away from each other and the world community. The belief that the bulk of our foreign policy should be comprised of insisting other countries do what we tell them, while we fail to engage in any meaningful global cooperation is hypocritical and condescending.

The security of America lies not in defense spending but in ensuring well paid jobs for hardworking Americans, guaranteed health care and a strong education for our nation's youth. We must shift our priorities. This body must stop spending half of America's tax dollars on the funding of the military industrial complex and instead invest in economic projects that really will keep America safer. With our economy in crisis it should be clear that continuing to hemorrhage money on defense spending while our future economic stability is uncertain is not in the best interests of our citizens. Congress must wake up. In other words, I believe that Congress must reassess our current priorities and in so doing begin to provide for the traditional sense of security by first ensuring economic security, health security, and job security for all.

WEBCASTER SETTLEMENT ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, September 27, 2008

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Webcaster Settlement Act of 2008, and want to thank the gentleman from Washington for his leadership in bringing this resolution to the floor.

H.R. 7084 is a simple yet critical legislative solution that allows private sector actors to keep a negotiating process alive. Why? Because Internet radio royalties operate under a government license, and Congressional approval is necessary to allow a private sector agreement to effectuate outside the government process.

This is a good thing. After all, if I have a choice between a government mandated solution and a private sector agreement, I will take the private sector agreement almost every time.

The Webcaster Settlement Act of 2008 guarantees that our nation's performing artists, musicians, record labels and webcasters can continue copyright negotiations that are making slow but steady progress. And a resolution to the issue is critical, so Internet radio listeners can keep on listening and the people performing those songs can be properly compensated.

The Copyright Royalty Board is small government body tasked with determining royalty rates for the use of music over Internet radio. It is obscure to some, but its decisions are critical to my constituents in Tennessee and Internet radio users across the country. Unfortunately, this body was tasked with the authority to adjudicate a rate structure at the direction of Congress back in 2004. This proved to be unwise, since the Board's decision announced in March of 2007 sparked a lengthy lobbying battle and an acrimonious relationship between two important members of the music industry's family; the copyright holder and the copyright deliverer.

We now understand that the parties are gradually coming together, and growing closer to finding common ground. Congress should do everything in its power to ensure the negotiations continue, and H.R. 7084 is the vehicle to guarantee the talks will continue.

I urge my colleagues to support it, and yield the balance of my time.

IN HONOR OF TAIWAN'S NATIONAL DAY

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, September 28, 2008

Mr. RAMSTAD. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a proud member of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus to congratulate Taiwan on its 97th National Day on October 10th.

The people of Taiwan have many reasons to celebrate and be proud of their country. Having elected President Ma Ying-jeou, the Taiwanese have returned the KMT party back to power, thereby effectively passing Huntington's "two-turnover test of democratic consolidation." By successfully transitioning from one