

But I just submit, Madam Speaker, if this continues, and I keep being shut out on getting this idea from the people for the people by the people, and the votes keep being that we can't bring a bill like that to the floor for a vote, it may be, come November of 2010 that the voters will say, we want to elect somebody that will do what needs doing and not helping their cronies.

Oh, yes, we heard, well, the leadership over here in the House has the idea for this great TARP money. We're going to use it for infrastructure. Oh, yeah. Well, apparently the bill being proposed only has 5 or 6 percent for infrastructure.

You let people have their own money, you let them spend it where they need spending, the money will be in the economy, the economy will increase, and everybody will be better off and the people will have heard from us as they wanted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KUCINICH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous 5-minute Special Order in favor of Mr. POE of Texas is vacated.

There was no objection.

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.

LAST STAND FOR RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, in the dusty, arid plains of West Texas, where the tumbleweeds blow across the prairies, there's a small town called Fabens. Fabens, Texas, a population of about 8,000, mostly lower-income individuals, but they're doing what they can to eke out an income out of the land that they work.

On February 17, 2005, almost 4 years ago, these events took place. A drug dealer by the name of Aldrete Davila came across from Mexico, which is six miles from Fabens, Texas, right here on the map. He's driving a van. He has about \$750,000 worth of narcotics in that van. And of course, he's smuggling drugs into America; something that occurs along the entire Texas/Mexico border.

He's confronted by one of our first responders, Border Security Agent Jose Compean. Border Agent Jose Compean does his job, and he gives chase to this drug smuggler in the van. Aldrete, the smuggler, turns his van around, tries to head back to Mexico with his cancer that he's going to try to sell in the United States. He abandons his vehicle. He gets down in the river bed between Mexico and Texas in the Rio Grande Valley, and he has a fight with Jose Compean.

Another border agent by the name of Ignacio Ramos shows up and meets the call for help to stop this drug trafficker into the United States. Meanwhile, a fight ensues between the drug dealer and Border Agent Compean, and Compean is left in the river bed, bleeding, while the drug dealer runs back to Mexico.

Ignacio Ramos, border agent, sees what's taking place. He sees the drug dealer, in his opinion, with a weapon, keeps turning back like this, and he fires his weapon.

□ 1515

And the drug dealer disappears.

Unbeknownst to all of us, there was another vehicle on the other side of the border, waiting to pick him up and take him back to wherever he came from.

Jose Compean and Ignacio Ramos, border agents, at the time they pick up the shells that are fired, they don't immediately report the events, and nothing occurs until the following takes place:

The drug dealer goes back to Mexico. It turns out that he was wounded. He was shot in the buttocks. Without being too graphic, the bullet went in one cheek and came out the other cheek as if he were pointing his weapon when he got shot.

But be that as it may, in some way, the U.S. Government gets involved. It goes to Mexico. It finds the drug dealer and says, "Looky here. Have we got a deal for you. All you've got to do is come back to America and testify against those two border agents for a civil rights violation," or whatever we charged them with, "and we will treat you for your wounds, and we will give you a pass to go back and forth across the border, and we will not prosecute you for bringing drugs into the United States."

So, months later, that immunity deal is struck, and the border trespasser—smuggler—gets a deal, a backroom deal, a deal to testify. In my experience as a former judge and prosecutor, unfortunately, when you make a deal with a criminal, you usually get the testimony you want.

What happened was they were waiting to bring these two border agents to trial on numerous charges, but remember, all they did was fail to report the fact that they fired their weapons. Normally, under Border Patrol policy, that is an administrative punishment. You get days off—5 days from what I under-

stand. They could have been fired for that, but they were not. They were prosecuted in Federal court for numerous violations, mainly for shooting the drug smuggler. Of course, they both never knew they shot the drug smuggler until they were told by our government.

In any event, unbeknownst to us, the trial gets postponed. We don't know why the trial is postponed. It's not tried right away, but it gets postponed. The reason it got postponed, which we all learned much, much later, was that, while the drug smuggler was out on his get-out-of-jail-free card, thanks to our government, he was still smuggling drugs into the United States.

In October of 2005, lo and behold, Aldrete brings another load of narcotics into the United States. At first, our government denied that they knew anything about that, but I ended up receiving a copy of the DEA report, which showed specifically that Aldrete was bringing in drugs while he was out on this get-out-of-jail-free card.

So the trial takes place after it is postponed. In March of 2006, these two border agents are tried. They are convicted. The jury never knows that the star witness—the government's bought-and-paid-for witness—brought in another load of drugs. The U.S. Attorney's Office convinced that judge from keeping that testimony from the jury.

Now, the main witness the government had against the two Border Patrol Agents was this witness, the drug smuggler who was given a deal to testify.

Now I ask you, Madam Speaker: If you were on a jury and you had to decide if a person was telling the truth, wouldn't you want to know that, while they were waiting to testify after they were given immunity, they were still bringing drugs into the United States? Wouldn't you want to know that to judge whether or not this witness is telling you the truth or not?

I think, probably, you would want to know that, and I think that's probably the reason the government kept that testimony from the jury, because they didn't want the jury to know the truth about their witness.

In any event, the witness testifies. The border agents are convicted; they are found guilty, and are sent to the Federal penitentiary for 11 and 12 years. Under Federal law, they will serve most of that time.

This case sort of disappeared from the radar until people started talking. The news media even brought this case up. A reporter by the name of Sara Carter has been following this case since the trial. Thanks to her and to other people in our national media, this is still being discussed by not only Members of Congress but by the public throughout the country.

Since I, really, have almost no life, I read the 3,000-page transcript of the trial, so I know what the jury heard. I read it. In September of 2006, long after

the trial and the transcript was prepared, Members of Congress started asking questions about: Well, was this really the right thing to do, to prosecute the border agents? Maybe we were on the wrong side of the border war. Maybe we ought to have been prosecuting the smuggler, the drug dealer. Maybe we ought to have been doing that. So questions were being asked.

Several of us met with the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general's office to try to find out exactly what happened down there in Fabens, Texas in February of 2005. The transcript hadn't been produced yet, so we couldn't read it. So we met with these individuals, and they told us the following:

Well, these Border Patrol Agents are rogue cops. They're just bad guys, and they knew that the suspect was unarmed when they shot him. They went out that day, intending to shoot illegal aliens coming into the United States, and they didn't believe that this drug dealer was a threat to them when they fired.

Now, that's a different kind of story than what I've just told you. So we took them at their word because you know you're not supposed to lie to Members of Congress. It's kind of against the law in the United States.

After we got the transcript, after we did more investigation, we learned that Ramos and Compean, the border agents, did believe the drug smuggler was a threat. They did believe that he had a weapon, and they never said they went out that morning with the intent to shoot some illegal coming into the United States.

Now, as a side note—a little rabbit trail here—that occurred in September of 2006. I and several others have asked our government to investigate those government officials who came to the Members of Congress and misled us. Of course, nothing has happened to those individuals. They just sort of went away, you know.

But back to the case. Now that we had the transcript, now that we'd read the transcript of the trial and we'd found out exactly what had happened, many of us in Congress had felt that what had occurred in this trial wasn't the appropriate thing to do and that the way the two border agents were treated wasn't really the most appropriate way to be treated.

So, in October of 2006, Ramos and Compean were sentenced to 11 and 12 years in the Federal penitentiary. While in prison, Border Agent Ramos was assaulted. Both of these agents have spent much of their 2 years now—2 years—in solitary confinement. Solitary confinement in our Federal penitentiaries is reserved for the meanest criminals we have in our culture, in our society. Yet border agents go into solitary confinement for allegedly their own protection. Yeah, right.

Anyway, they're serving their time, but this case does not go away. In July

of 2007, because so many of us on both sides of the aisle were concerned about justice, I introduced legislation, saying exactly that no Federal funds will be used to incarcerate Ramos and Compean. In other words, the Federal penitentiary cannot use taxpayer money to incarcerate these border agents. That legislation passed this House unanimously in 2007 by voice vote. There was not one dissenter on either side of the aisle because Congress, the House portion of Congress, said it's just not right. They shouldn't be incarcerated.

As all of you know, what we do when we pass legislation is we send it down to the Senate. That bill, like many other bills, never got voted on by the Senate, so both of the individuals stayed in prison.

Before they ever got to trial, Ramos and Compean were offered a deal by our government. It's not unusual in criminal cases. They were told, if you plead guilty to these violations, we'll get you 1 year in the Federal penitentiary for what you did out there in Fabens, Texas. Now, if you don't plead guilty, well, we're going to go to trial, and we're going to try to get you more time in the penitentiary.

So the Federal Government initially thought that the case was worth 1 year in the Federal penitentiary, but because Ramos and Compean, citizens of the United States, exercised their right under the Constitution to have a jury trial, they were punished for the right to be tried before a jury. The Federal judge then gave them 11 and 12 years after the jury convicted them.

I don't think that people charged with crimes should be punished for exercising their right, their constitutional right, to ask for a jury trial. In any event, the case continues to this day.

What has the effect of it been on our Border Patrol Agents? Well, let me tell you. I'll give you an example.

Luis Aguilar, a Border Patrol Agent assigned to the Tucson office, was in California recently on border patrol, trying to catch the bad guys. Two vehicles, a Humvee and a pickup truck, come across the Mexican border into the United States. He and other Border Patrol Agents give chase to this Humvee and to this pickup truck. The Humvee and pickup truck see the good guys, and like they normally do, they try to run from the good guys. They turn their vehicles around and head to Mexico.

Luis Aguilar from Tucson, Arizona, Border Patrol Agent, what he did was get in front of those vehicles at some distance and throw out these spikes—where if a car or a vehicle runs over the spikes, they blow out the tires—to stop the bad guys from going back to where they came from. Rather than go over the spikes, the guy in the Humvee jumps off the road and runs over and kills Luis Aguilar, Border Patrol Agent. Then he flees off, back into Mexico, along with the pickup truck.

Where he is today, that individual, we know not.

Now, you know, the Border Patrol Agents are nervous about using their weapons. The reason they're nervous about using their weapons to protect the dignity of our country and to capture the bad guys who come into the United States is due to cases like Ramos' and Compean's. When these Border Patrol Agents fired their weapons, they were prosecuted instead of the drug smuggler. So that makes Border Patrol Agents hesitate.

I've heard that the Border Patrol policy is they can't fire their weapons unless fired upon. Now, anybody who has ever been in law enforcement, anybody who has ever been in the military knows that's a bad idea. I can't fire to defend myself unless somebody shoots at me? I can't stop someone who is pulling out a gun? Apparently not. Luis Aguilar is just one example.

I've talked to Border Patrol Agents all the way from Brownsville, Texas, to San Diego, California, and they tell me, "Hey, when we're in that situation, we really don't want to fire our guns even though we can, even though it is the right thing to do, because our government doesn't back us; they back the other side."

Sheriffs along this entire area here that I have mentioned—from Brownsville to San Diego—the Border Patrol Sheriff's Association, are of all races, and they're of both political parties, but to a sheriff, they are concerned about border security, and they tell me the same thing: "We are hesitant to use our weapons in these cases even though, under State law or even Federal law, we're permitted to do it, because our government is not going to stand beside us. They're going to stand beside the drug dealer." So that's the chilling effect.

But whatever happened to Aldrete, the drug smuggler? Remember, he got that second case, that second case when he brought drugs into the United States while he was waiting to testify. It's the one that the Federal Government denied, really, ever occurred until they finally had to admit it because we saw the evidence of the DEA report.

Well, he ended up getting prosecuted for that. The U.S. Attorney's Office finally prosecuted him but not after the taxpayers of the United States treated his wounds in El Paso, Texas, not after he filed a \$5 million civil rights suit against the United States Government. He brings drugs in. He finally gets prosecuted. Now he is in a Federal penitentiary, ironically, doing less time than the Border Patrol Agents.

□ 1530

Who are these two individuals we're talking about? Well, these individuals are Compean and Ramos. These photographs were taken the day that they were hauled off to the Federal penitentiary. Those are the last photographs that I know of that were taken in public because they're still in the penitentiary at this time.

Now, we've heard a lot about this case. A lot of Members of Congress have got involved, the American public has gotten involved. Over 400,000 American have sent petitions to the White House asking for relief; 70,000 of those petitions are from the State of Texas where citizens are getting involved in what they believe is the unjust incarceration. And this has continued.

When I go back to Texas, which I do every weekend, I still have people, regular folks, "What's happened to those two Border Agents Ramos and Compean?" And I'm surprised to some extent because the American attention span is about "that" long. You know, we hear something in the news and we move on, something else happens the next day. But this has been going on now for over 2½ years. And yet the American public is still very concerned. They still tell us about it.

I don't know why these two Border Patrol agents were relentlessly prosecuted, but they were. I don't know why they made a backroom deal with the drug smuggler Aldrete, but it did happen.

This is not a pleasant place to be on the southern border with our neighbors in Mexico. It is a violent place. It's violent because of the drug smugglers coming into the United States. We hear about all of the murders on both sides of the border because of the drug cartels, you know, people like Davila who brings in drugs into the United States. He and his comrades are the reason there is so much violence on this entire border.

Good people on both sides of the border live in fear every day because of the drug cartels and the problem that occurs there.

I was down recently on the Texas-Mexico border, and I was asking a Texas Ranger—I won't mention his name—I was asking a Texas Ranger, I said, "What's it like down here on the Texas-Mexico border at night?"

And he said, "Congressman POE, it gets western. It gets western down here."

Now, what he was saying was people start shooting. They start shooting at us on this side of the border. We know of incursions from the Mexican military that have come into the United States, supposedly rogue Mexican military helping the drug cartels move drugs into the United States. It's violent on the Texas-Mexico border, along the entire southern border, because of the drug cartels.

So what we have done, as a culture—since we have a great appetite for, unfortunately, drugs in this country—we've sent some good people down there to protect us, the Border Patrol agents, and, of course, the local sheriffs. And they're doing what they can to protect us. And yet when they get in a fix, our government sides with the bad guys.

So chilling effect on our border agents and our border protectors? You betcha. You betcha. Because those in-

dividuals who protect us are concerned about what happens to them if they, in a split-second decision, have to make a choice of what to do to protect us. And if they make the wrong choice—or at least the wrong choice in the eyes of our government—they're going to get prosecuted. That's very unfortunate.

Don't get me wrong, Madam Speaker. I have no sympathy for criminals. I've always been in law enforcement. I spent 8 years prosecuting criminals in Houston, Texas, and then I was on the bench for 22 years prosecuting outlaws. And I tried a lot of cases. I heard about 25,000 criminal cases during that time. And I tried people who shot police officers, and I tried police officers that unjustly shot citizens. So I have no stake in this except justice ought to occur in this case. I have no sympathy for criminals: police officers or otherwise.

But in this case of Ramos and Compean, we've asked for a pardon. The President of the United States of America has the absolute right under our Constitution to pardon any individual. I carry this little pocket Constitution around with me, as most Members of Congress do, and read it from time to time. But there's a section here that I would like to put in the record: Article 2, section 2 of the U.S. Constitution talking about the power of the Presidents of the United States.

"He shall have the power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States."

Now, you notice he doesn't have to get permission from some committee; he doesn't have to get approval from the Justice Department. Now, he certainly can get recommendations from anyone he chooses. He can have a committee make recommendations. But the Constitution doesn't give him that obligation. He can pardon anybody, and he doesn't ever have to tell the reason.

Our President has not chosen to pardon these two individuals. I've known the President a good number of years. I respect him greatly. On this particular issue, I hope and would wish that he would exercise the power that he has under the Constitution. His reasons for not doing so are his own, and I respect that as well.

So now we're asking that the President, before he leaves office in the next 5 days, commute the sentences of these two Border Patrol agents.

Assume the facts, as presented by the government, are true because the case has gone through the appellate process and has been ruled on by other judges. Assume everything is true. They've served over 2 years in the Federal penitentiary, both of these individuals. I've talked to their wives, their kids, and it is time for these two Border Patrol agents to go home.

So we're asking the President to reprieve the individuals, which, under our terminology, is to commute the sentences. Commute them for the time served and let them out of the Federal penitentiary and maybe we can get a

photograph of them leaving instead of going into the penitentiary.

And that's what we're asking the President, in all due respect, to do.

And I would say this: I have been very outspoken on this issue. Members of Congress on both sides have been very outspoken on this issue. And I would hope that the President, if he's irritated at me or other Members of Congress who have been outspoken on this, that in all due respect he not take it out on them. Because we're the only voice these two individuals have: Members of Congress.

So be mad at me, be irritated at me, but don't be taking it out on these two individuals. Commute these two sentences.

Apparently I'm going to be the last Member of Congress that will speak on this House floor officially before President Bush leaves office next Tuesday. As I am speaking before this body, another member of the Texas delegation, JOHN CULBERSON, is walking down Pennsylvania Avenue in this 28-degree weather and he's carrying a letter, one of similar letters that have been sent to the President by Members of Congress asking for a pardon or a commutation.

This letter that will be hand delivered to the White House this afternoon by the time I finish speaking is signed by 30 members of the Texas delegation. And in the Texas delegation, as most people know, we cover all the political bases from the far right to the far left. But yet 30 of us, of the 32, have agreed these individuals need to be having their sentence commuted.

Also signing this letter are the two U.S. Senators from the State of Texas asking that the President, in his compassion, commute the sentences of Ramos and Compean.

You know, as I mentioned, I have the utmost respect for President Bush when he was a governor and his 8 years in office. But I hope he would give this case some extra thought and exercise his constitutional right. And why do I ask him to do that? Because it seems like it's the right thing to do. It seems like justice. And you know, justice is what we do in this country.

After we cut through all of the smoke, at the end of the day we want justice to prevail in every situation because justice is the one thing we should always find in this country. Justice was allowed to be in the Constitution under the Pardon Clause giving the power to the President to make that decision, the clause to commute the sentence giving the power to the President because sometimes the President just needs to intervene to make sure justice, at the end of the day, is what we find.

I hope the President considers this commutation, considers what Members of Congress and the thousands of Americans who have asked that this case be resolved in a way that these two individuals can be released and go back home to their families in a just way.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, January 15, 2009.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: As Members of the Texas Congressional Delegation, we are writing to ask for your personal intervention to commute the sentences of United States Border Patrol Agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean.

As you are aware, these two agents were prosecuted and convicted for shooting an illegal immigrant drug smuggler in Texas near the border with Mexico and were each sentenced to over 10 years in prison. Ramos and Compean have been incarcerated since January 2007 and in that time, Ramos has been assaulted in prison and both men have been placed in solitary confinement because of the danger they face as a result of their law enforcement backgrounds.

Many of us have written to you over the past few years with concerns about this case, and as your administration comes to an end, we respectfully request that you use the exclusive authority given to you under Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution. We appeal to your good reason and sound judgment as fellow Texans and ask that you correct this injustice by commuting the sentences of U.S. Border Patrol agents Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean.

Sincerely,

John Culberson, John Cornyn, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Michael McCaul, Kenny Marchant, Kevin Brady, Pete Olson, Pete Sessions, Ralph Hall, John Carter, Bill Archer, and Kay Granger.

Ted Poe, Louie Gohmert, Gene Green, Lamar Smith, Sam Johnson, Henry Bonicca, Mac Thornberry, Michael Burgess, Michael Conaway, Randy Neugebauer, and Jeb Hensarling.

Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chet Edwards, Solomon Ortiz, Sam Johnson, Joe Barton, Henry Cuellar, Rubén Hinojosa, Sheila Jackson-Lee, Ciro Rodriguez, and Al Green.

AGREEMENT ON MUTUAL FISHERIES RELATIONS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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 Natural Resources:

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation Extending the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Russian Federation on Mutual Fisheries Relations of May 31, 1988, with annex, as extended (the "Mutual Fisheries Agreement"). The present Agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes in Moscow on March 28, 2008, and September 19, 2008, extends the Mutual Fisheries Agreement until December 31, 2013.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Russian

Federation, I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 15, 2009.

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY RELATING TO CUBA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 111-9)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the Federal Register and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the Federal Register for publication, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, as amended and expanded on February 26, 2004, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2009.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, January 15, 2009.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. SESSIONS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of attending a funeral.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KUCINICH, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WOLF) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, January 22.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, January 22.
Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, January 21 and 22.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 53 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, January 16, 2009, at 4 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

115. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Home Mortgage Disclosure [Regulation C; Docket No. 1341] received January 7, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

116. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System's final rule — Community Reinvestment Act Regulations [Docket ID: OTS-2008-0021] (RIN: 1550-A29) received January 7, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

117. A letter from the Secretary, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's third interim report on an ongoing study of the accuracy and completeness of information contained in consumer reports prepared or maintained by consumer reporting agencies and methods for improving the accuracy and completeness of such information, pursuant to Section 319 of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003; to the Committee on Financial Services.

118. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's report on the Community Services Block Grant for fiscal year 2006, pursuant to Section 674 of the Community Services Block Grant Act; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

119. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to North Korea that was declared in Executive Order 13466 of June 26, 2008; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

120. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and pursuant to Executive Order 13313 of July 31, 2003, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Western Balkans that was declared in Executive Order 13219 of June 26, 2001; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

121. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting as required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and