

have been attacked by primates in the last 10 years . . . 100 that we know of. The most important issue of the world? Maybe not, until tragedy strikes your family or your community.

The second notion, that somehow it would not magically stop overnight the ability to have a wild animal, that is not domesticated, that has no business being treated as a pet in somebody's home, is an excuse not to act. That betrays lack of knowledge of what we have done dealing with animal welfare for the last 50 years.

To be able to deal with frameworks moving forward, establishing protections is important. In 2003 we dealt with the problem of having large cats, tigers, lions, panthers that people kept as pets. We're also going to have to do something in the long run with other inappropriate pets like crocodiles and pythons.

These are not trivial items. This is not appropriate treatment for some of God's creatures, and they put families at risk. We in Congress should establish these frameworks to avoid future problems.

The most important point is that, if the provisions of our bill had been established policy, that poor woman wouldn't be in a hospital in Cleveland because the monkey that attacked her would not have been shipped from Missouri (along with others that were disbursed around the country) to Connecticut to her neighbor.

I would suggest that it's important for people to take a step back and look at critical areas of animal welfare and the relationship that we have with them. It is important to pass this legislation, as the House did overwhelmingly last session, only to have it die in the Senate. It's important to pass it again, but it's also important for people to be able to deal with establishing an appropriate framework for relationships with animals so that it doesn't have to become the most important thing in the world for one family or one community. Instead, we have a logical, rational set of policies that are good for the welfare of animals, that protect our families and have the Federal Government playing its appropriate role.

Already 20 States around the country have done their job with an outright prohibition. It's time for the Federal Government to amend the Lacey Act to extend the protections dealing with captive primates, to help in a small but critical way make all our communities more livable and our families safer, healthier and more economically secure.

OUR STANDARD SHOULD BE WHAT UPHOLDS THE DIGNITY OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, yesterday I introduced a privileged resolution

here in the House which asked the Ethics Committee to look into the relationship between campaign contributions and earmarks. This has been a problem, as we know, for a long time but it was brought to a head just recently when a lobby firm, a powerhouse lobby firm that had \$14 million in revenue just last year, it was revealed that they were being investigated by the FBI.

This firm was quite prominent. It passed a lot of campaign contributions to Members here on Capitol Hill. In return, clients of this lobbying firm received in one defense appropriation bill \$300 million. So it was quite lucrative for this firm obviously to do what it was doing.

Anyway, it was revealed that the FBI was investigating this firm, and within days, the firm completely imploded. It has dissolved. One week or so after it was revealed, it's gone, but the damage has been wrought to the dignity and decorum of this House. We sit here today all under suspicion because a firm spread so many campaign contributions around, and many earmarks were received. And no matter what the intent was or the motive here, the appearance of this does not reflect well on the dignity and decorum of the House.

We have to remember that most of the earmarks sought by this firm, this firm that is now under investigation, are for for-profit entities, private businesses. These earmarks are essentially no-bid contracts. A Member of Congress will simply say, I want an earmark for this firm. Maybe it might be in his district, it might not, but it's a private, for-profit-making company, getting a Federal contract without scrutiny otherwise, with nothing and no other bids. Nobody else can bid on it.

Here, let me just step back for a second. One thing that is unbelievable here is we will be considering an omnibus appropriation bill, a \$410 billion bill, tomorrow. We received a list of the earmarks that will be in that bill yesterday. So I think within 36 hours or so of receiving the list of 9,000 earmarks, we will be considering the bill.

Now, we have had rules in this House, and good rules, passed which stipulate that we have transparency, that we are supposed to be given notice of these earmarks well in advance. I would submit that 36 hours for 9,000 is hardly transparency, but even if it were, transparency has to be followed by accountability. Accountability means that somebody should be able to stand up and challenge any of these earmarks, to challenge whether or not a for-profit entity, a company in somebody's district, ought to be getting a sole-source contract by a Member, with no scrutiny by other Members of this body. I cannot come to the floor tomorrow, nor can any other Member, and challenge any of these earmarks, to look at the relationship between earmarks, campaign contributions, or to

simply say is this a good use of Federal spending.

Then we found that—add insult to injury, 9,000 earmarks with minimal notice—we found that the PMA Group, who lobbied for many earmarks in last year's defense bill the year before that, clients of the PMA Group received as many as up to a dozen earmarks in this omnibus appropriation bill that we'll be considering tomorrow. Let me say that again. A firm under investigation by Federal authorities, for what might be misused or mishandled campaign contributions to Members of Congress, clients of that firm are receiving earmarks in the appropriation bill that we'll be passing tomorrow, and not one Member here has the ability to go in and challenge a single one of those earmarks. It's take-it-or-leave-it on the whole bill, one vote at the end, take-it-or-leave-it, no ability to challenge. That simply isn't right, Madam Speaker. That's not right.

That's why we need the Ethics Committee to take a look at this. We know from press reports that somebody's taking a look at it. Politico reported on February 12 that, "Several sources said FBI agents have spent months laying the groundwork for their current investigation, including conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions."

Now, we may not want to look at it, but the Justice Department is. We have the obligation here to uphold the dignity and decorum of the House. Our standard should not be investigations, convictions, and imprisonment. It ought to be what upholds the dignity of the House. Let's pass this resolution.

THE ESSENCE OF THE GREATNESS OF AMERICA LIES IN ITS PEOPLE, NOT IN ITS GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting sitting on the floor listening to the speeches during this period of time.

On the one hand, I listened to the gentleman from Virginia talk about a bipartisan approach to deal with our problem of fiscally irresponsibility and the load of debt that we are placing on our children and grandchildren. On the other hand, I did hear a gentleman from the other side of the aisle talk about why it's Bush's fault.

When I was in school, they were teaching us debate. We talked about the ad hominem argument, the personalization of the argument. Usually that meant that when you didn't have the facts you tried to make it personal.

There was also discussion by a gentleman from the other side of the aisle about the fact that we're finally going to be concerned about the people of America, as if those who disagree with you would be people who are not interested in Americans. I'm not sure that