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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DOYLE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 24, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL F. DOYLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

GUN AMENDMENT TO OMNIBUS PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) for 1 minute.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I rise today out of concern for the public lands bill that we are taking up. We will be taking up the Senate amendments to H.R. 146. I support the underlying goals of our Nation's conservation systems, but I am concerned about overreaching actions by the Federal Government negatively affecting the American public.

The original bill, S. 22, combined 170 separate measures—most of which have never received a committee hearing. Last week, the Senate called up H.R. 146, an unrelated battlefield preservation bill, and substituted the text of S. 22. Because we have already passed an earlier version of H.R. 146, the measure can be shielded from further amendments. This is unfortunate. There will be no opportunity to amend this bill. By sidestepping a legislative process, we are not making this bill better.

Last week, there was an amendment that protects hunting and fishing, but it certainly was silent because it didn't need to be vocal at the time on the right-to-carry provision. But, on March 19, U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly single-handedly decided to block the government's common sense policy.

We can do better, Mr. Speaker, and we should do better.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I rise today to highlight the critical investments in America made by this Congress and by the Obama administration through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to turn our economy around.

We are embroiled in the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Our economy remains in a recession that dates back to December, 2007. Our gross domestic product decreased 6.2 percent in the fourth quarter of last year. Housing prices have declined for 24 consecutive months. Unemployment is at a 25-year high—and rising.

More than 4.4 million Americans lost their jobs, including a staggering 651,000 jobs lost last month. In my district, one of the wealthiest in the Nation, applications for food stamps increased 79 percent over the previous year.

In the past 12 months, Americans have lost 4 years of wealth, upending the carefully planned retirement strategies for millions of our fellow Americans. Over the next 2 years, if we do nothing, as some propose, our economy and the American people will suffer an estimated $2 trillion in lost potential, lost productivity, and lost earnings.

We know the price of inaction. The last 8 years left us a dire legacy we won't soon forget: Trillions of dollars of budget surpluses squandered; critical infrastructure repairs and improvements ignored; alternative energy research and development placed on the back burner; regulations neutered and the financial sector allowed to run amok; poverty ignored and allowed to grow; middle-class Americans saw their purchasing power decline dramatically while a privileged few saw theirs grow and soar; and millions of jobs and trillions of dollars of economic progress lost.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer afford the inaction of the last 8 years. That's why this Congress acted, in concert with President Obama, to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It was a bold stroke to put people back to work and make critical investments in our Nation's infrastructure that have been so neglected in the last 8 years.

We acted to ensure the future prosperity of our country. The Recovery Act will save or create 3.5 million jobs, including 9,300 in my own district, and provide needed investment in education, energy independence, health care reform, transportation, infrastructure, and tax relief for the middle class.

While no one action we can take will instantly fix all of our economic troubles, our investments are showing progress. Thanks to the Recovery Act, shovel-ready projects throughout the Nation are breaking ground, putting people to work planning, constructing,

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and managing these projects. Highway construction projects nationwide receive $30 billion, with an additional investment of $10 billion in transit and rail projects.

Thanks to the Recovery Act, those firms that were in fact put out of business or had to delay work are now being put back to work and putting people back to work repairing and improving roads and bridges, building schools, modernizing street light systems and water treatment plants, and building many other needed but neglected capital projects in my district and across the Nation. These are real jobs building real projects that are helping real Americans.

In the 4 weeks since the legislation was signed into law, Mr. Speaker, $175 billion has already been allocated, including $77 billion for education throughout the country, $27 billion for highways, and $15 billion in new Medicaid funding badly needed by our States.

The economic crisis has caused shortfalls for virtually every State and local government in the Nation. Our State and municipal governments are among the country's largest economic engines, performing everyday functions that Americans rely on daily, from public safety, to public health, to local education, to public libraries.

The Recovery Act provided $53 billion in State stabilization funding badly needed by our States that are hemorrhaging red ink right now. Specifically, the investment in education, for example, will pay immediate long-term dividends for our economy. Enhanced educational support includes $40 billion for local school districts and $21 billion for higher education, and will create increasing opportunities to prepare our children to enter the workforce.

In addition, our investments in education are paying off immediately by stemming the loss of tens of thousands of jobs for teachers and custodians and bus drivers and nurse's aides and teacher's aides all across school districts in the United States.

One of the primary drivers for economic recovery will be our investment in the technology field as well, Mr. Speaker. The world is changing and it's critical America stay at the forefront. In order to reduce our reliance on foreign oil, we will move towards a cleaner, greener economy. The stimulus addresses both of these areas.

The Recovery Act provided $30 billion to transform our existing energy systems and $8 billion in weatherization and energy efficiency funds that will create 87,000 new jobs weatherizing 2 million households across the United States.

The cost of health care continues to rise dramatically, Mr. Speaker, and it's incumbent upon us to reduce costs without harming existing coverage. The Recovery Act included almost $20 billion to accelerate the switch to health information technology systems by doctors and hospitals to modernize health care systems. It's estimated that this reform ultimately will yield an annual saving of $77 billion in health care costs to average Americans all across the country.

This act is only one piece of the economic mosaic, and I know it's going to succeed.

TIME BOMBS TICKING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We have a lot of controversies here in Washington, D.C. There's even controversy over whether some of us should be legislators or communicators. But there's one area that we all can be policymakers, come together, make the economy stronger, and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

In every congressional office there's a copy of the Congressional Quarterly Weekly. The current issue on page 656 has an article about the EPA dealing with the Pentagon pollution. I invite every Member, every legislative director, every staff member who's responsible for dealing with defense or dealing with the environment to pick up this article and read the two pages.

It illustrates a bigger issue here—not just a dustup in the last administration between EPA and the Department of Defense—but the role that we will all play with thousands of time bombs literally ticking in every State and most of our congressional districts.

It's embarrassing that we still have almost 10,000 toxic sites with unexploded ordnance and military toxin scattered in every State of the Union, and 3,449 of these sites are Superfund sites. Amazingly, 2,600 of them are formerly used defense sites that, at the current rate—these are bases that have been closed—at the current rate, it will take more than half a century to get rid of these dangerous elements and return the land to productive use.

This is not just a serious problem for every State and almost every community. First and foremost, it is a danger to our military, to their families, and to their neighbors, having these toxic and unexploded ordnance lying around. It also is a serious problem for military readiness.

One of the reasons that States and local governments are resisting the expanding training footprint that our military needs today is because we, the federal government hasn't been a very good neighbor. People don't know how long they are going to be left with a landscape that is littered with explosives and toxic substances.

Three times since I have been in Congress, we have had to pull forest firefighters out of raging flames in the forests because bombs were exploding because past military training had left shells behind. There's a subdivision in Pennsylvania on a former military site that does not have fire service because they're afraid that the heat from a fire will explode a bomb.

This is a problem of military readiness now. It's also an opportunity—if we solve this problem—with the techniques and technology that will help us determine whether it's a 105-millimeter shell or it's a hub cab, can also be used to make our soldiers safer overseas from improvised explosive devices. It will save money in the long run because as these shells and contaminants break down and leach into the groundwater, it will be more expensive to solve the dangerous pollution in the future.

It's not just a problem of the Department of Defense and the Pentagon and administrations past and present—it's a problem for Congress. We have been missing in action. It's time for us to put a reasonable amount of money in cleaning up these Superfund sites and getting rid of the unexploded ordnance.

I don't want to read another story of where there are children, like those in San Diego, who found a bomb playing in a field behind their subdivision. It exploded killing two of them. News accounts of a bomb washing up on a beach in Florida or explosives discovered near a school are stories that we don't want to hear again.

It's past time that we own up to our responsibilities, that we solve the problem that will help military readiness today, technology that will save the lives of our servicemembers overseas, make our servicemembers at home and their families and the people who work with them safer, and meet our responsibilities to the environment. Oh, by the way. We will put tens of thousands of people to work cleaning up land and returning it to productive capacity all across America.

It's time that Congress is no longer missing in action in this serious problem of military contamination. Look at the Congressional Quarterly Weekly that is on your desk, page 656. Thank you.

DAY 63

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the distinguished minority leader, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, today is day 63 of the Obama administration and we are still waiting for something—anything—to create jobs and to help our economy.

The President says he wants input from the Republican side of the aisle—and we are proposing better solutions. Now it's time for Democrats to stop paying lip service to our ideas and actually work with us to start doing it.

□ 1045

During the stimulus debate, we offered a plan that would create twice as many jobs at half the cost, but the Democrats passed a bill that included hundreds of billions of wasteful Washington spending.

During the omnibus debate, we offered a plan that would freeze spending through September 30, but my Democrat colleagues passed a bloated bill with wasteful spending and some 9,000 earmarks.

Now Republicans are prepared to offer a better budget solution to create jobs, rebuild savings, and restore fiscal sanity here in Washington. The question is: Will Democrats work with us?

Unfortunately, the President's budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much from our kids and grandkids.

The Congressional Budget Office just last week reported that the President's budget is actually $2.3 trillion more costly than the White House initially claimed. In fact, his budget adds more to the debt in the first 6 years than his 43 predecessors have accumulated over the last 220 years. And his national energy tax will cost families up to $3,100 more each year.

All of this spending and taxing and borrowing begs the question: What in the world is the White House thinking?

President Obama should ask Speaker PELOSI and Senator REID to delay congressional action on this budget so that mounting concern on both sides of the aisle about his budget can be addressed. I think it is time to get back to reality. Our Nation is in serious crisis, and we need better solutions than what Washington has given the American people so far this year, and I and my Republican colleagues will be offering them.

RESPONDING TO WALL STREET

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Wall Street won three great victories. First, a plan was announced under which Wall Street puts up 6 percent of the money, assumes 6 percent of the risk, and takes 50 percent of the profits.

Second, the Senate announced that it was going to back burner the proposal to use the Tax Code to recoup the unjust enrichment received by certain executives on Wall Street.

And finally, the media continued its condescending drumbeat in which speaker after speaker in the media says the only proper approach is that one must denounce Wall Street, and then capitulate to Wall Street. And any of us who want to actually do anything that Wall Street disagrees with are just a bunch of angry peasants with pitchforks.

Well, let me say, anger is no vice and gullibility is no virtue, and faith in Wall Street is not the one true faith.

We have got to be willing to take action that Wall Street disagrees with and to deal with an establishment press which will then say we are governing out of anger. I am very angry, but I am not blinded by my anger. I am also not blinded by a gullible faith that whatever Wall Street does will be in the national interest.

First, let's take a look at this program where we put up 94 percent of the cash, Wall Street puts up 6 percent of the cash, but Wall Street gets 50 percent of the profit. You know with a deal like that, you could probably get Wall Street to buy lottery tickets for $3 a piece. They will put up not $3 a piece, but 6 percent of the $3, the Federal taxpayer puts up the rest, and then the winnings are split 50/50. Even if the average lottery ticket only pays out 20 cents for every ticket, that is a winning investment for Wall Street.

For us to give them half the profit while they take only 6 percent of the risk is a massive transfer of wealth from the American people to the hedge funds on Wall Street.

Second, let's look at this issue of bonuses and compensation. Now we passed a bill in this House last week that was imperfect. It was imperfect because it left alone million-dollar-a-month salaries, and it allowed any of the big Wall Street firms that were planning to pay multimillion-dollar bonuses to simply recast their compensation and call it million-dollar-a-month salaries, or raise them to $2 million a month, and the bill we passed would have no effect.

Third, the bill we passed last week, while it would deal with the AIG bonuses, did not deal with the Merrill Lynch bonuses. That is why today—and I hope to have some additional cosponsors before I introduce the bill—but later today, I will introduce legislation that will impose an excise tax that doesn't look at bonuses separate from the rest of the compensation package, but looks at the entire compensation package. It says if the package is over half a million dollars a year and you're working for a company that would be in bankruptcy right now if you weren't bailed out by the Federal Government, then in effect you are being paid that enormous salary with taxpayer dollars only because the taxpayers came through and bailed out the company that is paying you that money. And for that reason, we are going to insist that unless you want to face a major tax, you return to your employer all of your compensation in excess of half a million dollars. This is an approach that I think is fair. It is not punitive. It is not confiscatory. It simply takes from executives the huge amount of compensation that they received only because the rules of capitalism were suspended and their companies that should be in bankruptcy or receivership are instead operating independent of receivership and are paying salaries that exceed what should be paid to an entity that is dependent upon the Federal Government.

The bill will also provide that if the Treasury issues executive compensation regulations, people will be able to receive restricted stock without limitation.

So I look forward to getting additional cosponsors for my tax bill and responding to Wall Street logically and without gullibility.

SECOND AMENDMENT VOTE

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for weeks and weeks now, Democrat leaders in both the House and Senate have engaged in parliamentary contortions to block every Representative in this body of both parties from being able to offer even one amendment to the 1,200-page $10 billion omnibus lands package that contains over 170 individual bills. Since over 100 of these bills were never voted on in the House, this giant piece of legislation needs careful review in a fair and open process. Yet, fair and open consideration is precisely what Democrat leaders have denied in this House.

Today, the House Rules Committee will meet to decide how the most recent Senate-passed omnibus lands bill will be debated and voted on in this House, presumably tomorrow. While there are many areas of this bill that need improvement, there are several that rise to a serious level of concern. Let me cite four of them:

First, addressing prohibitions against American-made energy on public lands, prohibitions that would deny job creation in the energy sector on public lands;

Second, ensuring our border security by making certain that provisions of this bill don't ban the use of vehicles and other technology to patrol our border;

Third, ensuring that public lands continue to be open to public enjoyment. That includes wheelchair access for the disabled who would be banned under this bill, as well as access by Americans using bicycles and motorized bikes for recreation.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, an area of the bill that rises to a very high level of concern after a Federal judge's ruling last week, and that is the protection of Americans' second amendment gun rights on public lands.

Specific amendments have been filed with the Rules Committee to address each of these issues. Democrat leaders should now provide the House with a chance to vote on them. But more specifically, Mr. Speaker, the House must act on the omnibus lands bill to immediately protect the second amendment rights of Americans. Last week, Democrat leaders in the House and Senate added the Altmire language to the omnibus land bill to prevent the Federal Government from banning hunting and fishing on certain types of Federal land. At the time this amendment was added, the right of Americans to carry concealed firearms on park lands and wildlife refuges was in accordance with State laws, and that was already recognized in Federal regulations.

However, last Thursday a U.S. District Court judge based in Washington, D.C. single-handedly decided to block this second amendment policy. Now there is a giant hole in the current Altmire language, and Congress must fix it. Congress must not allow one Federal judge to single-handedly deny Americans their second amendment rights on Federal land.

I have introduced an amendment, along with the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) to the omnibus lands bill that would write into law the very protections struck down by this lone Federal judge. The House must vote on this amendment to repair the big void in the current Altmire language contained in the omnibus lands bill. There should be no excuses, no more delays, no waiting for another day or another bill. The omnibus lands bill is the best place to fix what this Federal judge has done.

If we are going to pass a 1,200-page bill that dramatically expands Federal lands in our country, Congress must protect American second amendment rights while on these lands. The Constitution and the second amendment should not be pushed aside by an activist judge and a complacent Congress. House leaders must allow a vote on the Hastings-Bishop amendment to the omnibus lands bill to protect the gun rights of Americans when we take up this bill presumably tomorrow.

2010 BUDGET RESOLUTION

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

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, this week the House Budget Committee will mark up the concurrent budget resolution for fiscal year 2010. Over a month ago, President Obama submitted a budget plan focusing on economic recovery, strategic investments, and most importantly, fiscal responsibility. At this critical juncture in our history, President Obama's budget addresses the mistakes of the past, makes much-needed investments in the future, and will create a better future for all Americans.

As we debate the merits of this budget resolution, we must not forget that President Obama inherited deep deficits and an economic crisis from the Bush administration. This chart shows the budget deficit over the years of the Clinton administration, and what the Bush administration did to the budget. The Bush administration left behind a $1.25 trillion deficit, a high unemployment rate, and an economy on the verge of collapse. President Obama came into office merely 2 months ago, but he has already successfully proposed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which will create or save 3.5 million jobs.

The President's budget continues the path toward economic recovery and fiscal responsibility with many necessary investments in education. The President's budget expands access to college education by making the American Opportunity Tax Credit permanent and indexing Pell grants to keep pace with inflation and the skyrocketing cost of college education. The President also doubles funding for early Head Start and expands Head Start.

The President's budget calls for improving and expanding access to health insurance and lowering the cost of health care for every American. The President's budget includes several provisions to improve quality and efficiency in the health care system, saving the American people approximately $300 billion over the next 10 years. The President believes that the only way to rein in the cost of government for the foreseeable future is to address the costs associated with health care, and this budget does that.

The President's budget also ensures that the Nation honors and cares for our veterans when they return home by increasing funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs by $25 billion over the next 5 years. This increased funding will help the VA reduce their claims backlog and modernize and improve VA hospitals and facilities. These investments in the VA will help address the large influx of new veterans into the VA system from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

□ 1100

So, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most telling feature of the President's budget is that it is an honest measure of where we are and of where we are going. The Bush administration used phantom budget tactics to keep the costs of many expensive measures out of the budget. Unlike budgets submitted in the past few years, the Obama budget honestly includes the cost of our military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and other items that we know we must pay for and have paid for every year such as the Medicare Doctor's Payment Fix and the Alternative Minimum Tax. President Obama's budget takes the necessary steps to put the budget back on a fiscally sustainable path once the economy recovers. The budget proposes to cut the deficit in half by 2013. Additionally, the President's budget proposes to restore the fiscally responsible pay-as-you-go rules, which were critical in turning the budget around in the 1990s.

Many may claim that the President's budget will cause deficits, but those who advocate the problems with the President's budget fail to remind themselves that the policies that they, in fact, are advocating are the policies that got us in the ditch we are in today. What they forget is that this Nation had to endure 8 years of failed economic policies, which produced one of the worst recessions in 70 years, the worst job growth since the Great Depression, an increase in the number of Americans living in poverty, and an increase in the number of Americans living without health insurance.

Furthermore, the Bush administration degraded the Federal budget's condition from healthy to weak, converting a 10-year $5.5 trillion surplus to more than a $3 trillion deficit—a swing of more than $9 trillion over 8 years and an average of over $1 trillion a year.

Mr. Speaker, these policies have failed. It is time to turn to the policies that work. The President's budget does just that. As a member of the House Budget Committee, we look forward to Wednesday's markup to ensure that the congressional budget resolution reflects the priorities of the President's budget.

CONSISTENCY, NOT CHAOS IN OUR PUBLIC LAND POLICY

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I am sure we all know the old story of the newlywed couple whose wife on her first meal that she prepares of a cooked ham presents the ham, and the two ends have been cut off.

When her husband asks why, she says, ''I don't know. That's the way my mother did it,'' and when the mother-in-law shows up, they ask why, and she says, ''I don't know. That's the way my mother did it,'' and when the grandmother finally arrives and they ask why she cut the ends of the ham off, the grandmother simply says, ''I have a small oven. A full ham won't fit.''

There are many things we do in government that are traditions that are as totally illogical as cutting the ends of the ham off. Only in a Federal court in this United States can we find a special interest group that can track down a maverick judge that contends that 8 months of study by the Department of Interior is, in fact, a last-minute review and because, in January of this year, the Department of Interior and the National Park Service finally updated its rules to allow concealed carry on national parks lands and make it consistent with our policy of concealed carry on all public lands.

You see, the national forest does not prohibit someone with a valid concealed carry license from going on public lands. The Bureau of Land Management, which manages some of our national parks, does not prohibit a valid concealed carry permit for going on their lands. Even President Clinton gave an executive order saying that our policies should reflect the State prerogative and authority. Only the National Park Service has tried to prohibit that practice, and the National Park Service is not just things like Yellowstone. It is virtually impossible, or at least it will challenge you, to try to get from Virginia into Washington, D.C. without either driving or walking on National Park Service land. You go in and you go out. There are no signs to tell you what you were doing, and indeed, law-abiding citizens have been

entrapped on park service land, carrying a concealed weapon permit, where if they had gone a couple of blocks further and had been back in Virginia, they would have, indeed, been legal. That is illogical and it is also unfair.

What we should do is what the National Park Service decided to do in January and simply say State laws will be the ruling procedure. If it is legal for a concealed carry in this State, it is legal on all lands that are owned and controlled by the Federal Government, not just some lands ''yes'' and some lands ''no.''

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington has an amendment that should be put on the bill that will be before us tomorrow to clarify once again that the policy of the United States should be consistent on all of their lands, not on some ''yes'' and some not on the others. It was an amendment that would bring respect back to the policy and the consideration and the study done by the Department of Interior, and it would reject an outstandingly flawed decision made by a judge that actually creates chaos rather than solving this particular problem.

It is important that the Rules Committee does open up this particular bill for allowing the Hastings amendment so that we could actually debate this issue on the floor, because this is the proper time; this is the proper vehicle, and it is the right time for us to have consistency on our public land policy, not chaos in our public land policy, created by a judicial decision.

CYBER ATTACKS TO AMERICA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss a critical national security challenge and what I believe is an imminent threat to the safety of our country. That is cyber attacks.

Computers control everything from our banking systems to our electric grid, our military networks to our businesses and government functions. Never in the history of the world have so many people had so much access to ideas, knowledge and skills. However, increased access also opens up additional vulnerabilities that allow our adversaries to potentially cause catastrophic economic and physical harm to our country. Nation-states, terrorists and other actors who seek to harm our Nation understand that the future of warfare is through cyber attack.

In recent years, American military leaders have noted an unfortunate increase in cyber attacks. The vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, James Cartwright, told Congress in March 2007 that America is under widespread attack right now in cyberspace.

But securing our networks is not simply the responsibility of the U.S. military. Mitigating vulnerabilities in America's critical infrastructure networks involves the work of a wide variety of government agencies and private-sector entities. Everyone, both in the public and private sectors, plays a role in securing cyberspace, and we must all work together to confront these threats.

Our Nation has some significant challenges ahead of us in the cyber security world. Right now, the United States is under attack, and quite frankly, we are losing the battle. I believe that it is essential that we act swiftly and boldly to respond to this threat.

I recently cochaired the CSIS Commission on Cyber Security for the 44th Presidency. Our goal was to develop recommendations for a comprehensive strategy to improve cyber security in Federal systems and in critical infrastructure. This commission was made up of renowned cyber security experts from across the country, both in and out of government.

In December 2008, after hundreds of hours of briefings, of working group meetings and discussions, we released our final report proposing a number of recommendations for the incoming administration to consider. Among the most critical and timely of those recommendations is the creation of a comprehensive national security strategy for cyberspace. ''Comprehensive'' means using all of the tools of U.S. power in a coordinated fashion: international engagement and diplomacy, military strategy and action, economic policy tools, and the work of the intelligence and law enforcement communities.

This strategy should begin with a public statement by the President that the cyber infrastructure of the United States is a vital asset for national security and the economy and that we will protect it by using all instruments of our national power. The commission also recommends that the Nation's cyber leadership be housed in the White House, not in any single agency.

We used the response to nuclear proliferation as a model for how to approach cyber security. Just as no single agency is in charge of nonproliferation, we recognize that the same is true for cyber policy.

To coordinate these efforts, we proposed creating a new office for cyberspace in the executive office of the President. This office would combine existing entities and would also work with the National Security Council in managing the many aspects of securing our national networks while protecting privacy and civil liberties. It is my hope that the leadership of this new office will be an assistant reporting directly to the President.

I am very pleased with President Obama's appointment of Melissa Hathaway to conduct a 60-day interagency review of the Federal cyber security mission. I think she is very knowledgeable of the issues surrounding the CNCI, and I have spoken with her regularly, encouraging her to review our critical infrastructure's defensive posture.

We have so many agencies that share in overseeing critical infrastructure protection that many issues fall through the cracks. This is an area I believe that we must improve on, and I look forward to working on legislation to implement the recommendations of the commission to ensure that our Nation is protected in cyberspace, and I certainly look forward to working with the administration on this important issue.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, what we do here in Washington, the policies that we make, have direct economic consequences on the market, on job creation or loss, on retirement accounts, and on the financial security of the American people.

For example, yesterday, Secretary Geithner finally released the administration's plan for dealing with the troubled assets that are dragging down our banks and that are impeding our Nation's economic recovery. The market jumped up 500 points.

Now, we still need to do some work to evaluate exactly how this plan will work and whether it is the best plan for the country, but I think this is a perfect example of how our actions here in Washington affect Wall Street.

I have a chart here with some data that I have assembled for the last 30 years, from 1977 to 2009, of market activity, and I want to show a broad trend that we see over that time regarding the market's reaction to government policies:

Here on the top, this yellow line, is the Dow Jones Industrial Average. You will see the red and blue panels. The colors here indicate which party is in control of Congress. So, where you have red, that is the control of the Congress, both the House and Senate, by Republicans. Where you have blue, that is the control of the Congress by the Democrats, both House and Senate. Where you have these slash/slanted marks, you have a divided Congress.

From 1977 to 1995, you see the Dow Jones growing gradually, minimal growth. You see when it hits the red panel that it moves sharply up. When you have, actually, the dot-com collapse and 9/11 and the divided Congress, you see it goes down. When it hits the red, it goes sharply up again.

The next chart down below shows budget deficits from 1977 to 2009. The bars above represent deficits. The bars below represent surpluses. Notice under President Obama that this last bar, the yellow line, is $1.752 trillion for fiscal year 2009. Let me just put that into perspective. That single deficit is more than the previous eight

deficits under President Bush combined. If I could show you the projected deficits, they are all trillion-dollar deficits out for 10 years as far as we can look.

So I think we need to really question some of the rhetoric we are hearing about fiscal responsibility about this present administration. These deficits have both immediate and long-term consequences. The long-term consequences are the debt that we are leaving to our children. In the more immediate term, they represent the eroding of our standing in the world. They are going to feed inflation and undermine the value of the dollar.

Last month, I met with a delegation of Chinese officials. The first question they asked me was, ''Congressman, is America abandoning the free market system?''

I mean the world is watching us, and they have expressed some hesitancy about buying more of our debt. I think, when we go in the market this year with $2 trillion or $3 trillion in treasuries to fund our budget, it is going to be harder and harder to find willing buyers.

When the rest of the world watches as the U.S. Government takes over private businesses, as government spending grows and as the government crowds out the private sector and stifles innovation and the entrepreneurial spirit on which this Nation was founded, we have serious problems. When we take these kinds of actions and make these kinds of policies, we are jeopardizing our standing in the world and our future.

How can we be the leader of the free world with this kind of government intervention and undermining of the free market?

I also want to point out here that there is a good lesson here on this bottom chart. You see these 4 years right here in a row. That is when the Republicans were in control of Congress and when President Clinton was in office. For the first time in years, we balanced the budget 4 consecutive years in a row, and we paid down on the public debt 4 years in a row. Now, Clinton deserves some credit, and the Congress deserves some credit, but we balanced the budget 4 years in a row.

The lesson here is that real bipartisanship works. The phony bipartisanship of wanting us to come in at the last minute and vote for something that we did not have any opportunity to create or to craft in the first place will not work. Real bipartisanship works and policies matter, and some policies help create an environment in which our economy can thrive.

The government cannot create wealth. The American people, entrepreneurs and businesses must do that. Yet the government can and at times has implemented flawed policies like spending too much, taxing too much and borrowing too much like we are seeing right now. Those policies have economic consequences.

□ 1115

OMNIBUS LANDS BILL THREATENS SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) for 3 minutes.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to support the Hastings amendment to the omnibus lands bill. I want to give you two examples why and they couldn't be farther apart and still be in America.

One is here in Washington, D.C. I had a friend who worked for the Federal Government who was getting threatening phone calls from a disgruntled former employee. She was an older woman who lived alone and worked for an agency here in the Federal Government. And so she got a concealed weapons permit to protect herself and was commuting in and out of D.C. to an adjacent State. Having that concealed weapon would have been illegal under the new judge's ruling, which is why the Hastings amendment to the omnibus lands bill needs to be adopted.

Now here is my example from the West. It is springtime. We're just starting to fix fence after a long winter that broke down some of the fences. When you're sitting on the ground fixing a fence and you're sitting right next to a rattlesnake, it can be very disconcerting. So a number of us carry weapons while we're fixing fence. If you let a weapon be hidden under your coat, even accidentally, you need a concealed weapons permit. So some people get concealed weapons permits and carry a weapon while they're fixing fence. Well, if you happen to be one of those people who is also driving between Cody, Wyoming and Jackson, Wyoming, you're going to go through Yellowstone National Park. That is your commute. And it would be illegal to have that weapon under this recent judge's ruling.

Mr. Speaker, both the Bush and the Obama administration have pushed forward with a rule to allow the carrying of concealed weapons on these lands subject to local State laws. By doing so, they bring these public lands in line with millions of acres of BLM and Forest Service lands where the application of local gun laws have guided our public land managers well. It took just one U.S. District Judge to throw that consistency out the window, but this Congress has the opportunity to renew it should the Democrat leadership in the House allow just one simple amendment to address the protection of our second amendment rights. Sadly, they are refusing to do so, placing the importance of a political win on the public lands omnibus bill above the constitutional rights of our citizenry to keep and bear arms.

I urge the Rules Committee and the House Democrat leadership to reconsider their priorities and to allow us to protect second amendment rights when we consider the public lands bill tomorrow.

RECORD DEBT, HIGHEST DEFICIT SINCE WORLD WAR II: BIPARTISAN SAFE COMMISSION IS THE WAY FORWARD

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

Mr. WOLF. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, the national debt topped $11 trillion for the first time in history. On Friday, the Congressional Budget Office reported that the Federal deficit will soar past $1.8 trillion this year, which would be the highest recorded since World War II, deficits for as far as the eye can see.

By 2019 the government will be paying over $800 billion annually just in interest on the debt, borrowing money from China and other countries.

Congressman COOPER of Tennessee and I have introduced the bipartisan SAFE Commission Act to create a national commission aimed at addressing entitlement spending and our national tax policy with everything on the table. It's bipartisan, with exactly 26 Republicans and 26 Democrats joining as original cosponsors. A similar proposal in the Senate has the support of Senator KENT CONRAD, chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, and ranking member Senator JUDD GREGG.

The commission would force Congress to act on the mountains of debt under which we are burying our children and our grandchildren. Without it, we will have the same old tired process, drawing lines in the sand while the tsunami of debt comes crashing over our shores.

According to a recent Peter Hart/Public Opinion Strategies survey, 56 percent of registered voters prefer a bipartisan commission to the regular congressional process as the best means of tackling our growing budget deficit and national debt. The current process isn't working. In other words, the American people understand we are in trouble, yet Congress continues to fiddle while Rome burns. Congress is made up of parents and grandparents, yet we seem to be prepared to push all of the debt we are creating off to our children and grandchildren.

The American people are experiencing a crisis in confidence and they are worried about our country. When we gain control of reckless spending, we will be able to rebuild the economy and see a brighter and stronger America, stronger for us and stronger for our children and our grandchildren, to bring about a renaissance.

How will history judge the 111th Congress if it doesn't deal with this issue? Cosponsoring the Cooper-Wolf SAFE Commission is supporting the bipartisan way forward. If any Member has a better idea that can honestly pass this place, then they ought to put it forward. If they can't, we should pass the Cooper-Wolf bill.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 21 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BLUMENAUER) at noon.

PRAYER

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

In the great scheme of things, it is You, Lord God, that can make the difference. Day by day, we make judgments and casual decisions. They all add up to a sense of direction. We move along a path in our personal lives. We set a path for this Nation. Guide us every step of the way, Lord.

Representatives in the United States Congress hold the hopes and perspectives of constituents and bring them to light on the floor of the House. To make daily decisions, they take all this into account, and yet they are appointed to be the ones to decide what is of most need for the Nation. Grant them prudence, patience, and perseverance. We ask this calling upon Your Holy Name, now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey 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.

ELECTING A MINORITY MEMBER TO A CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEE

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 277

Resolved, That the following member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee:

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET—Mr. Latta.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

KEEP TO THE FACTS IN DEBATING THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(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, the President has sent his budget proposal to the Congress, and for the next few weeks we will debate it, but let's keep to the facts in debating it.

There have been partisan attacks that claim that President Obama's budget will raise taxes on small businesses. In fact, the President's budget eliminates the capital gains tax for individuals on the sale of certain small business stocks and makes the research and experimentation tax credit permanent.

These proposals will spur investment and innovation to help small businesses. These are the job-creating engines of our economy, and nowhere else but in California can you see them so prominently working in this economy to build those jobs we so desperately need. Ninety-seven percent of all small businesses will not see their taxes increase in 2010.

What else is in the budget for small businesses? Twenty-eight billion dollars in loan guarantees to expand credit availability for small businesses at a time when it is really needed and support for the $1.1 billion in direct disaster loans for businesses, homes, and homeowners.

THE CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE AND THE REPORTER

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, over the last few years, numerous reporters in the United States have been subpoenaed about their confidential sources.

Law enforcement, namely prosecutors, hear about a story that a news reporter covers regarding scandals, corruption, crime, or coverups, and then has the reporter subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury. The purpose of the grand jury investigation is to find out who gave such information to the reporter, with the goal to bring the confidential source before the grand jury to testify.

Most States protect journalists from having to reveal that source. However, there is no Federal law to shield the identity of confidential sources. The protection of the source's identity is important because, without such a guarantee, sources would be fearful of possible reprisals if they revealed the information. Thus, the public would never know about the information.

With a few exceptions, prosecutors should not depend on reporters and their sources to root out crime. If whistle-blowers and reporters are protected by a shield law, the public's right to know will be enhanced with the free flow of information.

And that's just the way it is.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of the work Congress and the President have accomplished in just over 2 months: Expanded health care for 11 million children; assistance to families to maintain their health coverage through COBRA; funds to help States prevent cuts to Medicaid; and investments in safe and cost-saving electronic health record technology.

Some naysayers claim that the President and Congress are doing too much too soon. But we cannot fix our economy without fixing our broken health care system. And that's why I'm here today, to mark Cover the Uninsured Week with a call to action, action to achieve comprehensive health care reform, not next year, not in 4 years, but this year.

We have over 45 million individuals who lack health coverage in this country. Fifty-six billion dollars in unpaid bills are driving up the cost of insurance for everyone.

Reforming health care will strengthen our middle class, help businesses create jobs and be competitive, rebuild the economy and put our Nation on a sound financial footing far into the future.

Now is the time for comprehensive health care reform.

THE DEMOCRAT BUDGET BORROWS TOO MUCH

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. During the last campaign, Hillary Clinton said that she had a million good ideas. She probably never thought that she would be outbid by this new administration that has a million bad ideas that are going to cost American taxpayers literally trillions of dollars.

This current budget spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. It spends too much, and it's coming up to $2.3 trillion more than the White House even estimated a short time ago.

It taxes too much because every hardworking American household across this country is going to see their taxes go up by over $3,000. While they're struggling with paying their bills, their taxes will be rising.

It borrows too much because it's going to increase the debt on taxpayers across this country. Right now it stands at about $35,000 per capita. It's going to double in 8 years to around $70,000.

You know, Americans were voting for a change. I think at the end they were really hoping for something better than this.

THE RECESSION IS REAL

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, the recession is real.

In my home State of North Carolina, we have 100 counties. All of them experienced an increase in unemployment during the month of January. Seventy-two of the 100 counties had a 10 percent or higher rate of unemployment. Across my district, 23 counties, we now have an average unemployment rate of 11.2 percent. The highest county is 15.6 percent. That is unacceptable.

These numbers are staggering, and people are hurting. We must remember, Mr. Speaker, that we have met these challenges before, and we will meet this challenge now. North Carolina will benefit from about $6 billion as part of the stimulus package, which will create or save 105,000 much-needed jobs.

I am further encouraged by the efforts to ease the credit squeeze afflicting small businesses by buying up to $15 billion of securities that are linked to small business. This is an important step, Mr. Speaker, in encouraging lenders to make more money available to entrepreneurs and small businesses.

I encourage the President to continue with his economic recovery.

GYRATION IN THE STOCK MARKET

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, as you can see here in this graph, what the President called gyrations of the stock market, in February of 2008, a year ago, the Dow Jones Industrial Average sat at just 13,000 points.

Just before Congress passed the so-called rebate check package worth $168 billion of borrowed money, Speaker PELOSI said, ''This package gets money into the hands of Americans struggling to make ends meet . . . and stimulates our slowing economy.''

Yet since then, the market has lost nearly half its value. That's trillions of dollars in wealth wiped out in 1 year from retirement accounts and the savings of hardworking families across America.

The rebate package a year ago was just the first in many attempts to borrow and spend our way out of this situation. Here we have the $300 billion housing bailout, $200 billion for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, $700 billion in TARP funds. Look at the drop after that: $14 billion, auto bailout; $787 billion, stimulus, before the market dropped.

Our actions have economic consequences.

WE'VE GOT TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF THIS NATION

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I listened to my friends on the other side of the aisle. The problem is they forget, and they're kind of revising history. It's the Republican President and a Republican Congress that drove this country into the ditch financially and economically, and what we've got to do is change the course of this Nation.

That's what the President is undertaking to do, by providing small business with tax credits, with assistance as to funding of their particular projects, because that's where the real engine of our economy is—in small businesses.

So, last week, the President announced various initiatives to assist small business to make credit available to them for their various projects, to purchase their loans so that they could go forward, so small banks could make loans to small businesses.

This President is making available to 95 percent of us tax credits. So for 95 percent of the American public, they will see their taxes go down.

So my friends on the other side of the aisle forget the history that brought us here. The Republican administration, by giving tax cuts to the wealthiest while prosecuting a war, put us in a very difficult position, but we will get it out by changing the direction of this Nation.

THRUST FOR POWER

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, political liberty is founded on economic liberty, and history teaches that liberties are attacked during a crisis. The White House Chief of Staff has said never pass up an opportunity inside a crisis.

Secretary Geithner wants Congress to give the executive branch authority to seize any financial institution in America. It is an awesome power that will be quickly abused after just one Federal Reserve Board vote among all Presidential appointees. No judge would rule. No vote of the Congress would happen. This is a historic lunge for power.

Americans, remember, it was government agencies, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, that caused this crisis. I am from Chicago, and I know about government abuse and corruption.

We should reject Geithner's opportunistic thrust for control or rue this Congress when it gave only one branch of this government such a corruptible economic authority.

WE NEED ALL HANDS ON DECK IN THESE SERIOUS ECONOMIC TIMES

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, we are in very serious economic times. Unprecedented challenges confront this country. It is a time when we need all hands on deck.

Unfortunately, all we've heard from the other side of the aisle is hyperbole: we're spending too much, we're not doing this, we're not doing that. We need ideas.

The best in America has always come because of a conflict of ideas, because of ideas converging and taking the best and assimilating them into policies that benefit all Americans. We're not getting the help we need from our Republican colleagues. Again, we need all hands on deck.

Just this Sunday, one of the Republican Members was on a national talk show and said our faith in God is going to get us through this. Well, maybe it will, but faith in God, as important as it is, is not an economic policy.

We need the best that America has to offer from all sides of America. I invite my Republican colleagues to participate in this debate and help get us out of this economic challenge.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1111

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

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, each year there are two things that can get in the way of thousands of visitors seeking the picturesque vistas of Montana and all that it has to offer: high energy prices that make the trip too expensive and a blanket of smoke from out-of-control wildfires.

I've introduced legislation that brings some Montana common sense to those problems by literally harnessing the energy of a forest fire to generate electricity.

You see, nature wants to let the fires burn in order to preserve healthy forests, while man continues to try and put them out. When we interfere with nature, we wind up with overgrown forests that burn hotter and longer, wasting a potential renewable energy source. My bill restores these forests to a more natural and healthy density, while using the excess wood to create biomass energy.

Join me in cosponsoring H.R. 1111 to reduce the cost of wildfires and the cost of energy.

□ 1215

HEALTH CARE MYTH: HEALTH REFORM WILL LIMIT PATIENT CHOICE

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Another health care myth—if we reform our health care system, patients will lose choice. Again, this is simply not true. First, it begs the question: What choice do patients have today?

In America, we have choice, but too often it lies not with the doctor or patient, but with the insurance company.

Patients are denied physician-prescribed treatment, doctors are denied reimbursement for necessary care, and increasingly restrictive networks of coverage mean restrictive choice for patients.

A survey of the leading proposals for reform shows that no one is talking about limiting patient choice. In fact, a publicly sponsored plan, with a potential network of millions of Americans, would likely have one of the most robust networks of providers in the system, since doctors and hospitals would want and need to have access to this large pool of patients.

A public plan itself increases patient choice by allowing families to decide whether they want to continue with their private insurance plan or move to a publicly sponsored plan that might provide better coverage due to lower administrative and profit costs.

Health care reform limiting patient choice? It's just another myth about our health care system.

STOP JOB-KILLING TAX INCREASES

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, we will not recover from this recession unless small business leads the way by growing jobs. A small business owner from my district, Paul Robinson of Sterling Critical Products in Bloomington, was just in Washington last week. The message he has for Congress is that we need to provide incentives and access to capital for small business—and we need to make sure that no job-killing tax increases are added to their burden.

The $1.4 trillion tax increase that is on the table in the current budget proposal would drive a stake into the heart of our Nation's job creators. The proposal to raise taxes on asset creation by 33 percent would dry up badly needed capital and keep them from creating jobs.

My constituents are living within their means and they're cutting expenses. They expect Washington to do the same. But this budget spends too much, it taxes to much, and it borrows too much.

In these difficult times, we demand solutions that put people back to work. Let's reject these job-killing tax increases and start growing jobs now by supporting small business owners like Paul.

UNINSURED WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call upon the Congress to reform our health care system. It's important. Forty-six million Americans currently have no health care insurance, yet health care costs have risen dramatically in years.

Insurance premiums in California have risen at a rate more than twice the rate of inflation, eating up a larger and larger percentage of household incomes. With the recent economic downturn, far too many families are losing their employer-based coverage and unable to afford the cost of health care on their own.

Like it or not, we taxpayers are paying for the health care in some of the most expensive ways possible, through the emergency room, for those who are uninsured. Last year, hospitals in my district provided nearly $200 million in uncompensated care. Clinics in our Central Valley alone have provided care for over 600,000 who have little insurance or none at all.

This system cannot and should not continue. The bottom line is we are paying for the uninsured today—the 46 million Americans who do not have insurance. We ought to do it in a better way.

Our citizens' health and our Nation's fiscal health depend on meaningful reform. Let's begin that effort.

DIALOGUE WITH THE PRESIDENT

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Yesterday, Father Jenkins, the President of my alma mater, Notre Dame, explained his decision to give President Obama an honorary degree, in spite of his opposition to the culture of life expressed by that university and the Catholic Church. He explained it as an invitation to dialogue with the President. Let us hope so.

Let us hope there is a dialogue on the President's support for partial-birth abortion; on his opposition to the born-alive baby legislation; on his reversal of the Mexico City policy; on his support of Federal funding for embryonic stem cells where, denouncing it, he gave the back of the hand to Catholic moral teaching; and, in vitiating the Federal regulations guaranteeing the conscience clause, which is aimed at Catholic hospitals, doctors, and nurses.

Will this be an invitation to dialogue? Will the commencement address be an opportunity for the President to question his prior decisions? God only knows.

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK WITH A CALL FOR COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, this is Cover the Uninsured Week, March 22–29, and I call for enactment of comprehensive health care reform this year.

Reforming the Nation's health care to lower costs, improve quality, increase coverage, and preserve choice is a top priority for Congress and the President. Our Nation's health care system, which costs more every year and leaves more than 45 million citizens uninsured, and millions more underinsured, is in bad need of reform. We simply can't afford to wait any longer to make the changes necessary to ensure greater access to quality health care.

The problem of the uninsured and its impact on the entire health care system continues to grow. The Federal Government estimates that over 45 million individuals lacked health insurance coverage of any kind during the last year, 2008. Approximately $56 billion is in uncompensated care.

We need to change that.

PROTECT PROSPERITY

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. My constituents are tired of Congress spending money they haven't made yet for programs they don't want. According to the CBO, total spending in 2009 is going to be over $4 trillion. The price tag on the President's budget is over $3.6 trillion.

Our country can't afford this budget because it spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much money on our future.

The CBO predicts that this budget will push our deficit to 9.6 percent of GDP in 2010. That's historical. CBO predicts that this country will run historically high deficits for the next decade. The global demand for American debt will only continue if our economic policies are sound.

Although we don't know the limits of the debt market, this budget is going to push us into unchartered territory. As lawmakers, it is our duty to preserve and protect prosperity. If we pass this budget, we will be abusing the economic opportunity for our children and our grandchildren. What kind of protection is that?

BREAST CANCER PATIENT PROTECT ACT OF 2009

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

Ms. DELAURO. An estimated 184,000 cases of invasive breast cancer were diagnosed last year. I rise today in support of every breast cancer patient who has ever undergone a mastectomy and then been told by her insurance company that she has to leave the hospital in 24 hours or less before she has had time to recover.

I'm reintroducing the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act today. It's a bipartisan bill that overwhelmingly passed this House last year by a vote of 421–2. Simply, it ensures that after breast cancer surgery, a woman will have 48 hours to recuperate in the hospital, no matter which State she lives

in or what insurance coverage she has. It does not mandate that the patient has to stay in the hospital for 48 hours, but the decision should be made by patient and doctor and not by an insurance company.

A Lifetime TV petition has been signed more than 23 million times, with people directing their stories to their Web site. We have information from 50 States.

The last thing any woman should do at this time is to fight with her insurance company. This should not be negotiable. Ultimately, that decision should be up to the patient and her doctor.

Before this session of Congress is over, we must take Federal action and pass the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act into law, and take away this barrier to quality breast cancer care.

REWRITING HISTORY

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

Ms. FOXX. I am absolutely amazed at the ability of my colleagues to bring to life the novel 1984 by Orwell. They stand up every day and rewrite history right here on the floor of the House.

We had 55 straight months of job growth, which ended in January 2007. Why? The Democrats took over the Congress that month. The Democrats then began spending too much, taxing too much, and borrowing too much—and they continue to do that. Their plans are going to finish off this country as we know it. Their budget will grow the Nation's debt to 82 percent of the overall economy by 2019—from 41 percent in 2008.

The Democrat budget doubles the share of the debt on every family in America. The current debt per capita is roughly $35,000. Under the Democrat budget, this will rise to $70,000 in only 8 years.

Despite the Democrats' claim, their budget plans for deficits through 2019 are actually higher than any year before President Obama took office.

ONE ROAD TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

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

Mr. COHEN. The American public wants to see bipartisanship and they want to see Democrats and Republicans work together. This is my second Congress I have served in, and it's disappointing to me to see a new President—who was elected with overwhelming numbers and overwhelming support—not get bipartisan support and help on his efforts.

I don't agree with President Obama on everything that he is trying to do to get us out of the economic morass that the Republican Congress and the previous President and Vice President left us in. But I support our President because I know we have one executive authority and one Treasury Department that needs to have a direction to get us on the road to prosperity.

It is disappointing that people just criticize, criticize, criticize. The fact is we need to spend to stimulate this economy and we need a recovery package as well as a reinvestment package to get this economy moving, and that's what is being offered. It's being geared toward the middle class that's being forgotten.

On the other side, they talk about preserving prosperity for our children and our grandchildren. Most people in this country—95 percent—don't have prosperity, and they need help. The Democratic budget will help them with health care, jobs, and education.

HONORING PRIVATE JASON WATSON

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

Mr. FLEMING. I would like to take this privileged opportunity to honor and celebrate the life of Private Jason Watson. Private Watson is from Many, Louisiana, and recently died in Afghanistan.

Private Watson gave that last full measure of devotion to defend our freedom, and his death is a reminder of the cost of our liberty. Remember that it's not the Congressman and it's not the reporter who guarantee freedom of speech, it's the uniformed servicemembers working every day.

He proudly defended America so that we may never experience the horror of another terrorist attack on our home soil. While little will comfort the pain his family feels at this time, I want to thank them on behalf of our country, a grateful country, and let them know that their family will be in our prayers.

Private Jason Watson died a hero. I challenge my colleagues to remember our role here in Congress to make responsible decisions to protect the lives of Americans and to uphold the values and the pillars of freedom this brave young man died for.

HONORING THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL BAND

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

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the daughter of a musician to honor the Long Beach Municipal Band on their 100-year anniversary. On March 14, 1909, under the direction of E. Harry Willey, the Long Beach Municipal Band gave its first performance at the Bath House Band Shell on the Pine Avenue Pier.

In particular, what I want to say about the band is, following a 6.25 magnitude earthquake in March of 1933 that almost destroyed an entire city, it was the band that remained and played to encourage the families who were left in shelters and in nearby parks.

Since that time, the Long Beach Municipal Band has gone on to perform 57,000 concerts, over 1 million pieces of music. Also, it's known as the longest running, municipally supported band in our country.

Please applaud our great city that has made an investment—the second-largest city in the largest county in this Nation—to remember that art is a part of music, and it's a part of this country.

□ 1230

NOT LOOKING FOR A BAILOUT, JUST A FAIR SHAKE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. It has been 68 days, Mr. Speaker, since the United States Forest Service approved a notice to proceed with oil and gas production on the Allegheny National Forest.

Why is this cause for concern? Well, we are talking about a relationship between the Forest Service and private landowners that has existed for 86 years without a disruption of this magnitude. We are talking about jobs. Without permits to proceed, companies continue to lay off employees, and the local economy suffers.

Take Michael Hale's company, for example, a constituent of mine from Bradford, Pennsylvania, who recently wrote:

''As an owner of an excavating company during tough difficult times, I am discouraged by the recent actions by the Forest Service in delaying processing of notices to proceed for oil and gas extraction in the Allegheny National Forest.

''For the first time in our 26-year history, we have had to make adjustments to our workforce due to an inability to work. Currently, 35 percent of our field workers have been laid off and the remaining workers have had their hours reduced by 25 percent.

''We are not asking for a handout or a bailout of any kind, we just want to be able to work.''

It's companies like Michael Hale's that are the fabric which holds this economy and many of our rural communities together. They're not looking for a bailout, just a fair shake.

THE DEMOCRAT BUDGET SPENDS TOO MUCH, BORROWS TOO MUCH, AND TAXES TOO MUCH

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the Democrat budget spends too much, borrows too much, and taxes too much. But spending and taxes has never been

a problem for Speaker PELOSI and this Congress.

Take the latest boondoggle in the stimulus bill—$3 million for the city of Georgetown and Adams Morgan, upper income neighborhoods of Washington, DC, so that they can do, what? Install bike racks and buy 400 new bicycles for these poor yuppie elitist residents there, many of them who make six-digit incomes.

Now, to my knowledge, the Speaker pro tempore and I are the only Members of Congress who regularly ride bikes to work. I am glad. He's got a great bike. Mine isn't quite as nice, but I think it is a good bike. But we paid for them with our own money.

Why should the Federal Government have a bicycle program? Why are we going out to two of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Washington, DC and saying, hey, we are going to buy bicycles for you people? That is ridiculous, and that is part of the reason that we need to reject the Democrat budget. It spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much.

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 incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY COMPONENT PRIVACY OFFICER ACT OF 2009

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1617) to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to provide for a privacy official within each component of the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1617

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 ''Department of Homeland Security Component Privacy Officer Act of 2009''.

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIVACY OFFICIAL WITHIN EACH COMPONENT OF DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subtitle C of title II of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 141 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 222 the following new section:

''SEC. 222A. PRIVACY OFFICIALS.

''(a) DESIGNATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—For each component of the Department under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall, in consultation with the head of the component, designate a full-time privacy official, who shall report directly to the senior official appointed under section 222. Each such component privacy official shall have primary responsibility for its component in implementing the privacy policy for the Department established by the senior official appointed under section 222.

''(2) COMPONENTS.—The components of the Department referred to in this subparagraph are as follows:

''(A) The Transportation Security Administration.

''(B) The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

''(C) Customs and Border Protection.

''(D) Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

''(E) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

''(F) The Coast Guard.

''(G) The Directorate of Science and Technology.

''(H) The Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

''(I) The Directorate for National Protection and Programs.

''(b) RESPONSIBILITIES.—Each privacy official designated under subsection (a) shall report directly to both the head of the official's component and the senior official appointed under section 222, and shall have the following responsibilities with respect to the component:

''(1) Serve as such senior official's main point of contact at the component to implement the polices and directives of such senior official in carrying out section 222.

''(2) Advise the head of that component on privacy considerations when any law, regulation, program, policy, procedure, or guideline is proposed, developed, or implemented.

''(3) Assure that the use of technologies by the component sustain or enhance privacy protections relating to the use, collection, and disclosure of personal information within the component.

''(4) Identify privacy issues related to component programs and apply appropriate privacy policies in accordance with Federal privacy law and Departmental policies developed to ensure that the component protects the privacy of individuals affected by its activities.

''(5) Monitor the component's compliance with all applicable Federal privacy laws and regulations, implement corrective, remedial, and preventive actions and notify the senior official appointed under section 222 of privacy issues or non-compliance, whenever necessary.

''(6) Ensure that personal information contained in Privacy Act systems of records is handled in full compliance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code.

''(7) Assist in drafting and reviewing privacy impact assessments, privacy threshold assessments, and system of records notices, in conjunction with and under the direction of the senior official appointed under section 222, for any new or substantially changed program or technology that collects, maintains, or disseminates personally identifiable information within the official's component.

''(8) Assist in drafting and reviewing privacy impact assessments, privacy threshold assessments, and system of records notices in conjunction with and under the direction of the senior official appointed under section 222, for proposed rulemakings and regulations within the component.

''(9) Conduct supervision of programs, regulations, policies, procedures, or guidelines to ensure the component's protection of privacy and, as necessary, promulgate guidelines and conduct oversight to ensure the protection of privacy.

''(10) Implement and monitor privacy training for component employees and contractors in coordination with the senior official appointed under section 222.

''(11) Provide the senior official appointed under section 222 with written materials and information regarding the relevant activities of the component, including privacy violations and abuse, that are needed by the senior official to successfully prepare the reports the senior official submits to Congress and prepares on behalf of the Department.

''(12) Any other responsibilities assigned by the Secretary or the senior official appointed under section 222.

''(c) ROLE OF COMPONENT HEADS.—The head of a component identified in subsection (a)(2) shall ensure that the privacy official designated under subsection (a) for that component—

''(1) has the information, material, and resources necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of such official under this section;

''(2) is advised of proposed policy changes and the development of new programs, rules, regulations, procedures, or guidelines during the planning stage and is included in the decisionmaking process; and

''(3) is given access to material and personnel the privacy official deems necessary to carry out the official's responsibilities.

''(d) LIMITATION.—Nothing in this section shall be considered to abrogate the role and responsibilities of the senior official appointed under section 222.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1(b) of such Act is amended by inserting after the item related to section 222 the following new item:

''Sec. 222A. Privacy officials.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 1617, the Department of Homeland Security Component Privacy Officer Act of 2009. This legislation will give the Department of Homeland Security the resources it needs to accurately assess how its programs will impact the privacy of Americans.

The Department's Chief Privacy Officer was the first ever statutorily created Federal privacy officer. The goal when establishing this office was for it to serve as the gold standard for other Federal agencies as they sought to fulfill their missions, while ensuring that privacy was protected.

Building on the original intent of the privacy officer, this bill would make the Department the first Federal agency with statutorily created privacy officers in its component agencies. This will put the Department at the forefront of individual privacy protection

and will expedite privacy impact assessments awaiting completion and approval at the Department of Homeland Security.

The bill arose from a Government Accountability Office study, internal discussions with the Department's Office of Privacy, and publications released by the DHS Chief Privacy Officer.

The act requires the Component Privacy Officers to, among other things: Serve as the main point of contact between their component head and the DHS Chief Privacy Officer; draft and review Privacy Impact Assessments and Federal Register notices published by their component; monitor the component's compliance with all applicable Federal privacy laws and regulations; and conduct supervision of programs, regulations, policies, procedures, or guidelines to ensure the component's protection of privacy.

The presence of a full-time Component Privacy Officer would ensure that privacy considerations are integrated into the decision-making process at each of the DHS's components.

This body approved this commonsense measure during the previous Congress, and I urge my colleagues to continue to support this much-needed legislation so that DHS can effectively protect everyone's right to privacy.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today in support of H.R. 1617, the Department of Homeland Security Component Privacy Officer Act of 2009. Introduced by my committee colleague, CHRIS CARNEY, this bill is identical to H.R. 5170, which passed the House by voice vote last summer.

H.R. 1617 directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to designate a privacy officer in each of the Department's components, including the Transportation Security Administration, the Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, FEMA, Customs and Border Protection, the Coast Guard, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, the Science and Technology Directorate, and the National Protection and Programs Directorate.

Each of these privacy officers would be responsible for implementing the Department's privacy policy at the component level and would report directly to both the component head and the Department's Chief Privacy Officer.

We can all agree on the importance of ensuring privacy issues are considered and addressed when the Department's programs are developed and implemented. That is why I am pleased that the Department, under former Secretary Chertoff's leadership, has already taken the steps to establish privacy officers at the component level. The bill we are considering today will further strengthen these positions by statutorily mandating them and their roles and responsibilities.

I hope the committee will work to craft an authorization bill for the Department this year to address issues such as this one and to ensure the Department has all the necessary tools to achieve its vital mission. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1617.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close after the gentleman closes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. BROUN) 3 minutes.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) for offering this very important suspension.

As the gentleman knows, I am also on the Homeland Security Committee, and feel as though there is no greater responsibility of this body than to protect the homeland. But, Mr. Speaker, protecting the homeland doesn't begin and end with creating privacy officers in the Department of Homeland Security. It is also our responsibility as Members of Congress to protect the economic security of the homeland. Governing in a fiscally responsible manner is one way to ensure that the citizens of this country are economically secure.

I would note, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) who brought forth this suspension has voted for both the $1 trillion stimulus which included a secret provision to allow the AIG bonuses to go forward, and a $410 billion omnibus spending bill which contained nearly 9,000 earmarks. That is nearly $2 trillion of added debt that the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) and his Democratic colleagues voted to place on our children and our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, next week we will have another opportunity to vote up or down on massive deficit spending. The Democratic budget will add trillions more of spending to the national debt and to the families of this country.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the gentleman, Mr. CARNEY, if he intends to vote for next week's budget which runs contrary to the security of this country?

I yield to the gentleman, if he would care to respond.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, on the matter under consideration, I believe in the privacy that we are after.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the gentleman from Pennsylvania will not share his intentions with the American people. I think we should all be transparent about our votes here in Congress.

In 8 years, American families will either be on the hook for $70,000 apiece, or they won't. If you vote ''yes'' on this budget, you intend to put $70,000 of debt on each family in this country. If you vote ''no'' on the budget, you don't intend to put that burden on families. I hope we all keep that in mind as we prepare to vote on the Democratic budget next week. I believe that this budget is fiscally irresponsible.

Mr. CARNEY. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 1617, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, public trust in the Department's ability to protect personal privacy rights is abysmally low. The last administration's habit of bringing in the privacy office at the 11th hour is not the proper way to blend in the privacy protections and appropriate safeguards before policies and programs are under way.

Although we trust the new administration to do better, we must also acknowledge that privacy protections have to begin at the component level.

This bill will provide each Department of Homeland Security component that handles personally identifiable information with its own privacy officer that will report up to both its component head and to DHS headquarters. Further, the bill will balance the need for greater accountability of privacy rights associated with personally identifiable information while enhancing the safety of our Nation. I therefore urge my colleagues to support this measure.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1617, the Department of Homeland Security Component Privacy Officer Act of 2009.

The Department's Chief Privacy Officer has the distinction of being the first-ever statutorily-created Federal Privacy Officer.

Along those same lines, this bill, introduced by Representative CARNEY, the Chairman of our Management Subcommittee, would make DHS the first Federal agency to have statutorily-required privacy officers in all its major component agencies.

To be effective, privacy officers need to be where the action is happening, not waiting for notice after key decisions have already been made.

However, currently, if the Department's Chief Privacy Officer needs information concerning programs and policies that impact privacy rights, he has to go through the head of the relevant component.

Sometimes this information is shared, sometimes it is not.

When it is not, we have seen major privacy missteps, wasted Federal tax dollars, and even cancelled programs.

Under this bill, the Transportation Security Administration, Customs and Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, FEMA, and Coast Guard are among the key components that would receive a privacy officer.

Placing Privacy Officers in these key component agencies is the first step in ensuring that privacy protections are in place at the beginning of the policymaking process.

This bill was informed by an investigation by the Government Accountability Office, internal discussions with the Department's Office of Privacy, and publications released by the DHS Chief Privacy Officer.

Moreover, this legislation was approved overwhelmingly by voice vote when considered by the House in the 110th Congress.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation that will help ensure the effective operations of the Department of Homeland Security.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in full support of H.R. 1617, legislation that will greatly enhance the security of the Department of Homeland Security, thereby making our nation safer. I wish to recognize my colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, CHRISTOPHER CARNEY, for his work on this bill. In addition, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, BENNIE THOMPSON for his continued leadership in making our nation as safe as possible.

This bill amends Subtitle C of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, mandating a full-time privacy official within each part of the Department of Homeland Security. The privacy official will act under the direction of the senior appointed official of the Department of Homeland Security. The privacy official will work within the following components:

The Transportation Security Administration.

The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Customs and Border Protection.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Coast Guard.

The Directorate of Science and Technology.

The Office of Intelligence and Analysis.

The Directorate for National Protection and Programs.

The privacy official will be the senior official's eyes and ears regarding matters of privacy and matters that are within the Department of Homeland Security's jurisdiction.

The bill requires the new component privacy officials to monitor the Department of Homeland Security's component's compliance with all applicable federal privacy laws and regulations, implement corrective or preventative actions, and notify the senior privacy official for the department.

The privacy component officials would assist in drafting and reviewing privacy impact assessments, privacy threshold assessments, and the system of records notices, for any new or changed program or technology that collects, maintains, or disseminates personally identifiable information within their components, or for proposed rulemakings and regulations within their components. The level of hands-on involvement gives me confidence that the privacy officers in the various divisions will be able to perform their jobs effectively.

The privacy component officials would be required to conduct supervision of programs or procedures, to ensure protection of privacy, as well as implement and monitor privacy training for employees and contractors. The privacy officials would provide the senior privacy official with written materials and information regarding the relevant activities of the component, including privacy violations or abuse, that the senior official needs to prepare reports for Congress. These are protective measures which could be deemed intrusive, but that is exactly what we want from our privacy officials. A hallmark of the new administration is transparency in government. I believe that as the American people see more of what we do in Congress their confidence in government.

Any other responsibilities could be assigned by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security or the senior privacy official for the Department. Nothing in the bill should be considered to abolish the role and responsibilities of the senior privacy official, or diminish their capacity within the Department of Homeland Security framework.

This is an important job and my wish is that the new appointees are put in place in regular order and fashion so that they can get on with the job of protecting our homeland.

Mr. CARNEY. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1617.

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. CARNEY. 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.

MARITIME BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1148) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a program in the maritime environment for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists, to enhance border security.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1148

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

SECTION 1. MARITIME BIOMETRIC IDENTIFICATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall conduct, in the maritime environment, a program for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists, to enhance border security and for other purposes.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall ensure the program described in subsection (a) is coordinated with other biometric identification programs within the Department of Homeland Security.

(c) COST ANALYSIS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate an analysis of the cost of expanding the Department's biometric identification capabilities for use by departmental maritime assets considered appropriate by the Secretary. The analysis may include a tiered plan for the deployment of the program described in subsection (a) that gives priority to vessels and units more likely to encounter individuals suspected of making unlawful border crossings through the maritime environment.

(d) DEFINITION.—For the purposes of this section, the term ''biometric identification'' means the use of fingerprint and digital photography images.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include therein extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARNEY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1148, a bill that will enhance the Department of Homeland Security's ability to execute its border security mission in the maritime environment.

The U.S. coastline extends over 95,000 miles, and every day illegal immigrants and potential terrorists attempt to bypass the Department of Homeland Security watchdogs—the Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection—in their efforts to sneak into the United States. Many of these individuals have already been convicted of felonies in the United States, and many more are wanted by U.S. law enforcement on outstanding warrants for felonies and other dangerous crimes.

As the lead Federal agency charged with border security, it is DHS's mission to keep dangerous people out of our country. H.R. 1148 authorizes DHS to use technology that has been successfully piloted by the Coast Guard and the US-VISIT program since November of 2006 to identify dangerous people before they cross our borders and to better coordinate prosecution with Federal law enforcement agencies.

□ 1245

For example, as of March 3, 2009, the department has collected biometric information from 2,455 individuals interdicted in the Mona Pass, a 90-mile stretch of water in the Caribbean between Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

DHS uses satellite technology to immediately compare the individual's fingerprints against the US-VISIT databases, which includes information about wanted criminals, immigration violators, and those who have previously encountered government authorities. Of these nearly 2,500 individuals who have been checked, almost 600 people have been found to have outstanding wants and warrants in the United States.

To date, Federal prosecutors have successfully prosecuted 271, or 45 percent, of the matched individuals. As a

result, migrant flow in the Mona Pass has been reduced by 75 percent since November 17, 2006.

I would like to note that my colleague on the Management, Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee, Representative BILIRAKIS, had already an identical bill in the 110th Congress. And I was pleased to support his homeland security measure that passed the House by a vote of 394–3, with one Member voting present.

I urge my fellow Members to vote for this bill, one which gives the Secretary of Homeland Security the tools she needs to secure our Nation's maritime border.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I yield myself, Mr. Speaker, as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1148 which I introduced earlier this year. This bill directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a cost analysis and determine the most appropriate places to expand upon a successful pilot program conducted by the Coast Guard that collects biometric information on illegal aliens interdicted at sea. This tool, as used by the Coast Guard, has made a measurable impact on our border security and could be used by other DHS components with assets in the maritime environment, such as Customs and Border Protection. The expansion of this program will further enhance the Department's efforts to secure our borders.

The February 3 episode of Homeland Security U.S.A. showed the Coast Guard using this technology at sea when it rescued a boat full of illegal aliens attempting to make it from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico. As a result of the use of these biometrics, the Coast Guard was able to identify and detain 10 individuals with criminal records in the United States, including a repeat human smuggler who was wanted by Customs and Border Protection. This episode illustrated the use of biometrics at sea and on land. It works. In fact, the Coast Guard has reported that illegal migration in the Mona Pass, the narrow body of water between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, has been reduced by 75 percent as a result of the biometrics program.

Since the beginning of the Coast Guard's biometrics pilot in the Caribbean in November, 2006, the Coast Guard has collected biometric data from 2,455 migrants using handheld scanners. This has resulted in the identification of 598 individuals with criminal records, and the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Juan, Puerto Rico, has prosecuted 271 individuals for violations of U.S. law, with a 100 percent conviction rate.

We have seen the success of this pilot program. It ensures that individuals attempting to enter the United States illegally by sea that have criminal records will not simply be returned to their homelands. They will be detained so they cannot attempt to enter the U.S. again.

It is now time for the Department to determine the best and most effective manner to expand this program to enhance border security. I hope the Department will deploy this program in the most risk-based, cost-efficient manner possible consistent with the current appropriations of the Coast Guard and other DHS components. I also look forward to expanding the appropriations for this program. And I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort.

This is the third time that the House is considering legislation to authorize this program. An amendment I offered to the Coast Guard Authorization Act that was similar to the bill was considered, it was passed actually, last year by a voice vote on April 24. In addition, the House passed a stand-alone version of that amendment last summer, as Mr. CARNEY said, with his support, at 394–3.

The biometrics program is another tool that is being used by the Department in its effort to secure our borders. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1148.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no more speakers. If the gentleman from Florida has no more speakers, then I'm prepared to close after the gentleman closes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I have no more speakers, Mr. Speaker. I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 1148, and I thank the chairman.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume.

I urge passage of H.R. 1148, a bill to harness technology used for the past 3 years by the Coast Guard and the US-VISIT program to enhance border security in the maritime environment. H.R. 1148 seeks to build upon the success of the DHS pilot by requiring the Secretary of Homeland Security to analyze the cost of deploying the biometric program in other waters.

If enacted, H.R. 1148 would enhance the ability of DHS to conduct mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists interdicted at sea.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1148.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1148, a bill that will enhance the Department of Homeland Security's ability to execute its border security mission in the maritime environment.

Specifically, H.R. 1148 seeks to enhance DHS's ability to harness technology successfully piloted by the Coast Guard and US–VISIT program since November 2006 to identify dangerous people before they enter our shores.

Under this program, biometrics collected from individuals interdicted—at sea—are run, in real time, against our terrorist and criminal databases.

Today, state-of-the-art handheld scanners are used by DHS personnel to collect biometric information from individuals encountered at sea.

As of March 3, 2009, DHS has collected biometric information from 2,455 individuals interdicted in the Mona Pass—the 90-mile stretch between Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

Through these checks, nearly 600 people have been found to have outstanding wants and warrants in the U.S.

Federal prosecutors have successfully prosecuted 271 or 45% of the matched individuals.

This program is appropriately targeted to help break the cycle of individuals who are known criminals or criminal suspects being repatriated through U.S. borders, without prosecution.

It is also worth noting that, as considered today, the Secretary of Homeland Security is given wide discretion to come up with the parameters of the maritime biometric program, including a determination as to which DHS components will participate.

Last Congress, nearly identical legislation was passed in the House by a vote of 394 to 3, with one Member voting present.

I am committed to working with Secretary Napolitano, Representative BILIRAKIS and other key stakeholders to ensure that the language of H.R. 1148 is clarified and strengthened as it moves through the legislative process.

I urge passage of this important homeland security legislation that will help enhance the security of our maritime borders.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1148, a measure that will help protect our nation from another attack. This bill may not make headlines but it is at the essence of what protecting the American people is all about. We cannot wrap our nation in bubble wrap but we can take thorough and effective steps to thwart potential attacks. As we have seen, the forces of evil will go to enormous lengths to accomplish their insidious goals. That is why I join in a bipartisan spirit my colleague from Florida, GUS BILIRAKIS in support of this measure.

This bill requires the Department of Homeland Security, no later than one year after the date of enactment, to conduct a maritime program for the mobile biometric identification of suspected individuals, including terrorists.

Biometric identification is defined to apply to the use of fingerprint and digital photography images. The Department of Homeland Security must ensure that the maritime program is coordinated with other biometric identification programs.

The Department of Homeland Security must submit a cost analysis no later than 90 days after the prospective enactment of this bill, expanding its biometric identification capabilities for maritime use to the House Appropriations and Homeland Security committees, and to the Senate Appropriations, and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committees. The analysis could include a tiered plan for the deployment of the program that gives priority to vessels and units more likely to encounter individuals suspected of making unlawful border crossings by sea. It is clear that we must try to secure our borders from all sides and often the liquid borders are forgotten in the discussion.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this legislation passed the House of Representatives and I, like 394

of my colleagues, both Democratic and Republican voted for it. Fighting against terrorists and other criminals must remain a bipartisan effort.

It is also something that we must take up on all fronts: land, sea and air. Last weekend, in my role as Chairwoman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I had the opportunity to meet some of the fine professionals who work for the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration division. They work tirelessly to defend our nation's airports. They make a stressful job seem effortless, and often are invisible, which is the hallmark of good security. And just as the transportation security professionals I met in New York City's LaGuardia Airport make our nation safer, so will the maritime security professionals from the United States Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard is made of truly dedicated and able professionals.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support and urge my colleagues to support this legislation that will further strengthen our nation's ability to protect ourselves from both criminal and terrorist attacks.

Mr. CARNEY. 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1148.

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.

NUCLEAR FORENSICS AND ATTRIBUTION ACT

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 730) 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.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 730

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 a nuclear weapon, there could be little forensic evidence except the radioactive material in the weapon 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 COOPERATION.

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 in order to ensure an enduring national technical nuclear forensics capability and 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD an exchange of letters between the chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security and the distinguished chairs of the Committees on Foreign Affairs and Science and Technology.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 20, 2009.

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. 730, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on January 27, 2009, 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. 730. 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 bill 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. 730 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 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2009.

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. 730, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act. H.R. 730 was introduced by Congressman Adam Schiff on February 5, 2009.

H.R. 730 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. 730 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. 730 or similar legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, March 20, 2009.

Hon. HOWARD L. BERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BERMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 730, the ''Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act,'' introduced by Congressman Adam B. Schiff on January 27, 2009.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 730 contains provisions that fall under the jurisdictional of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I appreciate your agreement to forgo any further consideration or action on this legislation, and acknowledge 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 the jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, 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. 730. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, March 20, 2009.

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

DEAR CHAIRMAN GORDON: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 730, the ''Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act,'' introduced by Congressman Adam B. Schiff on January 27, 2009.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 730 contains provisions 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 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 over which your Committee has a jurisdictional interest 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. 730. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 730, a bill introduced by my thoughtful colleague from California, Representative ADAM SCHIFF, to address an emerging homeland security threat. The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is properly targeted to ensure that our government has the capacity to quickly determine the source of nuclear material should terrorists detonate a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb in our country.

A reliable nuclear forensics capability is essential for key decision-makers to respond in a timely and effective manner. If terrorists knew that we could trace a nuclear or dirty bomb back to them, they may well think twice about attacking us. The potential deterrent value of achieving a robust national nuclear forensics capability is immeasurable.

H.R. 730 has a multifaceted approach to obtaining this critical capability. First, it expresses the sense of Congress that the President should pursue international agreements and develop protocols to help identify the source of detonated nuclear materials.

Second, it tasks the Department of Homeland Security with the mission of developing methods to attribute nuclear or radiological material, both within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, DNDO, and in partnership with other Federal agencies.

Third, H.R. 730 recognizes that the development of an expertly trained

workforce and education programs in nuclear forensics are critical to attaining a robust domestic attribution capability.

Fourth, the measure authorizes the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center to undertake centralized planning, assessment and integration of all federal nuclear forensic activities.

The bill authorizes appropriations of $30 million per year for the next 3 fiscal years for this effort.

Identical legislation passed the House on June 18, 2008. Unfortunately, the Senate did not take up the measure in a timely fashion. In this Congress, I am pleased that we are offering this legislation early in the first session. With a strong bipartisan vote today, we can send this measure on a swift path to the President's desk.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

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, as the ranking member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology, I am pleased to see this important bipartisan legislation once again come up for a vote.

In the last Congress, we spent a great deal of time discussing the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic 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 primary defense against illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological material. DNDO continues to improve these technologies, and I hope that we will be supportive of their efforts.

Yet terrorists could overcome even the best detection systems. As we know, no technology is 100 percent sensitive. Border areas between official ports of entry also remain vulnerable. For this reason, defense against terrorism requires a multilayered approach, as it does in so many other areas. This bill is a strategy to add another layer. It will fortify our national capabilities in technical nuclear forensics, a science that plays a key role in the attribution of nuclear material to its source. It enumerates a variety of responsibilities for the department to advance and sustain a technical nuclear forensics capability, and it authorizes the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center to undertake this mission.

A key component is language designed to strengthen the pipeline of talented new scientists into this field. In recent years, as we know, the number of young people entering science has declined throughout this Nation. Nuclear fields in particular are suffering, especially harmful to nuclear forensics. This bill therefore instructs the Department to establish a National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program devoted to developing and maintaining a vibrant and enduring pipeline of scientific professionals. The program will grant scholarships and fellowships from the undergraduate through postgraduate and doctorate level in nuclear and geochemical science specialties directly relevant to technical nuclear forensics.

Yet, Mr. Speaker, we must remember that forensics is only one component of attribution. Success also requires credible intelligence and law enforcement-style investigation. All of these components together comprise a credible attribution program that will serve as a deterrent against nuclear terrorism.

The detonation of a nuclear device in a populated region of this country would be catastrophic in the truest sense of the word. It is indeed my greatest fear. We must have a layered system of defenses to deter, detect, disrupt and recover from terrorist attacks. This legislation will reinvigorate the scientific workforce and improve our defenses against nuclear and radiological terrorism.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and improve our much-needed U.S. nuclear forensic capability.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California, the author of the bill, Mr. SCHIFF.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and congratulate my colleagues on the Homeland Security Committee and Chairman THOMPSON, and my colleague from California, Mr. LUNGREN. I appreciate all their support. The committee has taken an important step forward in preventing nuclear terrorism by persevering with this legislation. I appreciate all the hard work that has gone into it.

Countries around the world now have access to technology that was once the realm of the few, and dangerous nuclear materials are sprinkled around the world. It seems that each week brings evidence of the connection between North Korea and a serious nascent nuclear program, and we are still unraveling the details of the nuclear smuggling ring headed by A.Q. Khan 5 years after it was uncovered.

This is not a new problem. Illicit nuclear material has been intercepted in transit out of the former Soviet Union many times since the end of the Cold War, and the material we catch is surely just a small fraction of the total amount trafficked.

□ 1300

Last week, Graham Allison wrote in Newsweek that ''the only thing that can keep nuclear bombs out of the hands of terrorists is a brand new science of nuclear forensics.'' During the Cold War, we forestalled a Soviet nuclear attack with the threat of retaliation. But the decentralized flexible terror networks that we face today are not as easily deterred. A terrorist attack will also not leave a missile contrail pointed back toward those responsible.

As Allison writes: ''The key to a new deterrent is coming up with some way of tracing the nuclear material backward from an explosion in New York City, for example, to the reactor that forged the fissile material, even to the mines that yielded the original uranium ore.'' The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is designed to do just that. The act is aimed at decision-makers in North Korea, Pakistan, Iran and elsewhere who could sell nuclear material, as well as the smugglers and corrupt officials around the world who could steal it. Those parts of the nuclear network can be deterred by the knowledge that if their material is found, the U.S. will find out and hold them responsible.

The first part of this bill expands our ability to determine the source of nuclear material by authorizing the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center in the Department of Homeland Security. This center will coordinate the various agencies and ensure an efficient, combined response when nuclear material is intercepted or, God forbid, used in a weapon. It will also advance the science of nuclear forensics, bringing in new radiochemists and physicists to rejuvenate a rapidly aging workforce, and funding research on new methods to identify materials.

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, some unfriendly, and the individual recipes are closely guarded secrets. However, little of the information needed for forensics is of direct use to adversaries, so in many cases the risk of not sharing the data is much greater than the risk of sharing it.

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

Mr. CARNEY. I yield the gentleman an additional 90 seconds.

Mr. SCHIFF. To build a nuclear forensics database, the bill asks the President to negotiate agreements with other nations to share forensic data on their nuclear materials, both civilian and military. This effort is vital, and the National Technical Forensic Center must play a key role in the negotiations to ensure that the data we obtain is the data necessary for quick attribution and response.

Nuclear terrorism is a vague threat of devastating consequence and, therefore, difficult to guard against. But as communications and transportation revolutions bring us ever closer to our allies, they bring us closer to our enemies as well. I believe this bill will help make sure that our ability to prevent a nuclear attack keeps up with our enemies' ability to prosecute one.

Again, I want to thank Chairman THOMPSON for his leadership and urge all Members to support the bill.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would be happy to grant 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL).

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 730, the Nuclear Forensic and Attribution Act. This act deals with the process of determining the source of confiscated nuclear material. It is a necessary component of our defense as it could deter states from aiding terrorists' efforts to carry out nuclear terrorism.

One need only look to the A.Q. Khan network and its proliferation to Pakistan, Iran, North Korea, to know how important this bill and this provision is.

In the last Congress we held hearings on this bill in the Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology Subcommittee, which I was the ranking member. I would like to thank my good friend, Mr. SCHIFF, for working in a bipartisan manner to incorporate some of our suggestions, including a provision that I requested to provide scholarships and fellowships for those pursuing careers in technical nuclear forensics. As we all know, America needs to incentivize more young people to go into highly technical professions such as these. The workforce involved in nuclear forensics, in particular, has been evaporating for the past 30 years. Without a qualified workforce, we cannot attain the level of preparedness we need.

This bill will reinvigorate the workforce pipeline to guarantee the Nation a resource of technical experts in this critical field, and strengthen America's attribution capabilities. To ensure a worthwhile return on public investment, the bill mandates a 2-year commitment of service within the Federal technical nuclear forensics workforce after graduation for fellows of the scholarship program.

Again, I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. SCHIFF, for introducing this important legislation and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, if I might inquire, does the gentleman have any other speakers?

Mr. CARNEY. I do not believe we have any more speakers.

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

Mr. Speaker, this is an important piece of legislation. This deals with one aspect of what I consider to be perhaps the greater threat we have to our homeland and that is nuclear weapons, nuclear material that could be made into weapons to be utilized against the United States and its citizens.

We need to do more in the area of nuclear nonproliferation. We need to do more in the area of negotiations with Russia, it seems to me, and bringing down our overall stockpiles. We need to do more in terms of invigorating or reinvigorating Nunn-Lugar. All of those are elements of an approach that is necessary to us.

This bill takes on a slightly different aspect of that same threat that is out there. It is necessary, it is important, and I hope we will have the unanimous support of the membership for this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF).

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I just wanted to thank my colleague, Mr. MCCAUL, for his help when he was chairing the subcommittee and the improvements that he made to the bill. I wanted to acknowledge and appreciate all your efforts.

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 730, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act. I would like to congratulate Congressman SCHIFF, Emerging Threats Subcommittee Chairwoman YVETTE CLARKE, and her predecessor, JIM LANGEVIN, for the thoughtful approach they have taken on this critical homeland security concern.

I would like to thank our members on the other side as well. This is a bipartisan issue that certainly does not cross party lines. It affects everyone. Given the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear weapon, it is imperative that the U.S. have a state-of-the-art nuclear forensics capability.

While a nuclear bomb is commonly referred to as a weapon of mass destruction, a radiological dirty bomb is better described as a weapon of mass disruption. A dirty bomb, if detonated, will likely kill few people. The main damage it would cause would be economic because it could render important commercial areas unusable due to radioactive contamination. In either case, we must build and sustain a nuclear forensics capability and workforce to address the nuclear and radiological threats that we face today. That is why I urge a ''yes'' vote on H.R. 730.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, H.R. 730, the "Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act," was first introduced in the 110th Congress by the gentleman from California, Mr. SCHIFF.

That measure, H.R. 2631, was marked up and adopted unanimously by the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology in October 2007.

It was unanimously approved by the Full Committee on Homeland Security on May 20 of 2008 and the House of Representatives on June 18, 2008.

Though the measure was taken up, amended, and passed by the Senate in late September, the stars didn't align and it didn't clear the last hurdle to arrive on the President's desk.

This Congress, we are getting out of the gate early, in hopes of ensuring that this critical homeland security legislation becomes law.

I would like to congratulate Congressman SCHIFF, my colleagues on the Committee for recognizing the need to move quickly.

We know that our enemies, both terrorists and rogue nations, are interested in developing and using nuclear or 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 capacity to quickly determine the source of the nuclear material so that the key decision-makers have the information needed to respond.

The deterrent effect of a robust nuclear forensics capability should not be underestimated.

Certainly, if terrorists know that we have a nuclear forensics capability that can pinpoint their role in creating a bomb, they are bound to have second thoughts.

Unfortunately, today, the U.S. must rely on forensic expertise and technology developed during the Cold War to address both nuclear weapons and the emerging threat of a radiological "dirty" bomb.

The nuclear weapons workforce is aging just as its mission has shifted from traditional deterrence policy to the more complicated challenge of containing the terrorist threat.

Our Nation's capabilities in the scientific fields of radio-chemistry and geo-chemistry must be fostered to meet this new threat.

That is the purpose of this bill.

H.R. 730 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.

I am heartened that the Obama Administration has indicated its willingness to engage in and re-energize such activities.

It also tasks the Secretary of Homeland Security with the mission of developing methods to attribute nuclear or radiological material—both within the Department's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, DNDO, and in partnership with other Federal agencies.

The legislation emphasizes that the development of a robust nuclear forensics capability depends chiefly on an expertly trained workforce in this area and provides support for education programs relevant to nuclear forensics.

H.R. 730 also—authorizes the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center, NTNFC, to enhance centralized planning and integration of Federal nuclear forensics activities; requires the Secretary to report annually to Congress on the Federal Government's efforts to enhance its nuclear forensics capabilities, including the status of workforce development programs; and authorizes $30 million per year for the next three fiscal years for this effort.

H.R. 730 continues the Homeland Security Committee's practice of authorizing programs and offices within DHS that are of value to the agency's mission in order to assure that the work can continue and progress can be achieved in the years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. CARNEY. I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 730.

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. CARNEY. 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.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK WEEK

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 182) expressing support for designation of the week of March 1 through March 8, 2009, as ''School Social Work Week''.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 182

Whereas the importance of school social work through the inclusion of school social work programs has been recognized in the current authorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);

Whereas school social workers serve as vital members of a school's educational team, playing a central role in creating partnerships between the home, school, and community to ensure student academic success;

Whereas school social workers are especially skilled in providing services to students who face serious challenges to school success, including poverty, disability, discrimination, abuse, addiction, bullying, divorce of parents, loss of a loved one, and other barriers to learning;

Whereas there is a growing need for local educational agencies to offer the mental health services that school social workers provide when working with families, teachers, principals, community agencies, and other entities to address students' emotional, physical, and environmental needs so that students may achieve behavioral and academic success;

Whereas to achieve the goal of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107–110) of helping all children reach their optimal levels of potential and achievement, including children with serious emotional disturbances, schools must work to remove the emotional, behavioral, and academic barriers that interfere with student success in school;

Whereas fewer than 1 in 5 of the 17,500,000 children in need of mental health services actually receive these services, and research indicates that school mental health programs improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences, decreasing discipline referrals, and improving academic achievement;

Whereas school mental health programs are critical to early identification of mental health problems and in the provision of appropriate services when needed;

Whereas the national average ratio of students to school social workers recommended by the School Social Work Association of America is 400 to 1; and

Whereas the celebration and of ''School Social Work Week'' during the week of March 1 through March 8, 2009, highlights the vital role school social workers play in the lives of students in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the designation of ''School Social Work Week'';

(2) honors and recognizes the contributions of school social workers to the successes of students in schools across the Nation; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe ''School Social Work Week'' with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the vital role of school social workers, in schools and in the community as a whole, in helping students prepare for their futures as productive citizens.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H. Res. 182 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 182, a resolution to recognize the week of March 1 through March 8, 2009, as National School Social Work Week.

School social workers, Mr. Speaker, have long played a critical role in schools and the community as a whole. They are professionals who work with children to address their emotional, mental, social and developmental needs.

School social workers help students build their confidence as learners, which is particularly important for elementary students who are just starting out on their academic careers.

During middle school, students face what is often a difficult transition from childhood to adolescence. For these students, school social workers help engage teachers, administrators, parents and students in the delivery of programs and services to help those students navigate these challenges and achieve success.

In high school, students begin exploring and defining their independence. These students face additional challenges along the way, including pressure to participate in risky behavior. School social workers help them with navigating these difficult decisions.

On top of this, school social workers must be responsive to the range of challenges that young people face every day, such as poverty, disability, discrimination, abuse, addiction, bullying, divorce of parents, loss of a loved one and other barriers to learning. School social workers are also on the front lines when disaster strikes, such as the Southern California wildfires, such as Hurricane Katrina or 9/11.

There is a growing need for school districts to expand their support services in schools. Less than one in five of the 17.5 million children in need of mental health services actually receive them. Many students go underserved, primarily because the national average ratio of students to school social workers is far beneath the 400 to 1 ratio recommended by the School Social Work Association of America.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution serves to recognize the importance of the school social worker and acknowledge the priceless role that they play in guiding our students' success in the ever changing world of the 21st century.

I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 182, expressing support for the designation of the week of March 1 as School Social Work Week to promote awareness of the vital role that school social workers play in schools and in the community as a whole and in helping students to prepare for their future as productive citizens.

From time to time, students face certain challenges in achieving academic success. Emotional, social and behavioral problems can be serious impediments to learning and can have a harmful effect not just on the individual student but others in the school setting. Schools, families and communities must work collaboratively to assist students with achieving positive academic and behavioral outcomes. School social work services provide a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of students through early identification, through prevention, intervention, counseling, as well as support.

School social workers are trained, qualified professionals who meet State requirements to practice social work specifically in a school setting. They provide direct services to students who experience academic and social difficulties while developing relationships that will help to bolster self-esteem and reward positive behavior. School social workers support teachers by offering options for addressing students' needs and by participating on the student support team. They also work with students and their families and communities to coordinate services.

According to statistics by the National Mental Health Association, 17.5 million children are in need of some kind of mental health services, and these workers address those needs. School social workers help students who otherwise might not receive services due to inaccessibility or lack of availability of services. I commend these dedicated professionals for the

service they provide in our school setting, and I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1315

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize for 5 minutes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY), and I rise today in support of House Resolution 182, supporting the School Social Work Week.

I introduced this resolution in order to recognize and support the critical, unsung work performed by school social workers in and across this country. School social workers bring unique knowledge and skills to schools and to the student services team all across this country. They work together to achieve the goals as a Nation that every child needs in order to succeed in school.

Each day across this country, school social workers can be found assisting educators to understand family, cultural and community factors affecting students as well as meet the demands of providing quality education for students of diverse backgrounds.

Each day, they can be found working with administrators to design and implement effective prevention programs and policies that address school attendance, teen pregnancy, school violence, and school safety issues, as well as child abuse and neglect, special education and more.

Each day, school social workers can be found working with parents so that they may effectively participate in their child's education as well as improve parenting skills, understand special education services as well as access school and community services related to their child's needs.

In health care, we must treat the whole person, and in education, we must do the same, so that is where school social workers recognize the need to connect the school and home in order to relate to the needs of the children. It is a shame that fewer than 1 in 5 of the 17 million children in need of mental health services actually receives them. Improved and expanded school mental health programs would help provide these services, the kinds of services that so many students desperately need and that are precisely the kind of services that school social workers can provide.

As our economy continues to struggle and families all over the country are losing their homes and jobs, the need for school social workers only becomes magnified. When you think about the fact that we are fighting a war overseas and an economic war here at home, you think about the fact that our schools are our bases. We would not think twice about making sure that our military is provided with the latest of armaments and with the best of training. Then why would we not think of providing the same for our teachers and our school social workers? They are the ones who are making sure that our students are not left behind in the field of battle.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, too many of our children are left behind in the field of battle—in the field of battle of illiteracy, in the field of battle of mental health, in the field of battle of addiction, and in the field of battle of violence. These are the kids in our inner cities who are being held hostage to a different enemy, not the global war on terror, but to the enemy that is causing 35–40 percent of the students in our inner cities to not graduate from high school. That is an abomination, Mr. Speaker.

If we do not have more school social workers to make sure that they graduate, then our schools in this country are not going to be worth the teachers that we have in them, because they are not going to have the school social workers to do the job to help those teachers make sure that their students graduate. That is why we need school social workers: to make sure that those students graduate. It is an important complement to our education system. We need emotional and social development just as much as we need literacy and numeracy development. That is why we need social workers in our schools.

Now more than ever, while the economic pressure is on those families and social pressures are on those families and the burden is on those families, we need to reach out where we can, and that is through the schools. The school is where we reach those children and reach those families in dire need. That is where we need our social workers, and that is why we need to pass House Resolution 182. I ask for its consideration.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. For some inexplicable reason, I have no one else here who is requesting time.

May I inquire of the gentlewoman if she is ready to close.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I am ready to close, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. In that case, I urge support of this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support Congressman KENNEDY's absolutely important legislation, H. Res. 182, that recognizes the week of March 1 through 8 as National School Social Work Week.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 182.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. WOOLSEY. 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.

RECOGNIZING ESTABLISHMENT OF COLLEGIATE PROGRAMS AT GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 77) recognizing and honoring the signing by President Abraham Lincoln of the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 77

Whereas, during 2009, the United States honored the 200th anniversary of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln;

Whereas, on July 4, 1861, President Lincoln stated in a message to Congress that a principal aim of the United States Government should be "to elevate the condition of men—to lift artificial weights from all shoulders—to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all—to afford all, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life";

Whereas, on April 8, 1864, President Lincoln signed into law the legislation (Act of April 8, 1864, ch. 52, 13 Stat. 45) authorizing the conferring of collegiate degrees by the Columbia Institution for Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, which is now called Gallaudet University;

Whereas this law led for the first time in history to higher education for deaf students in an environment designed to meet their communication needs;

Whereas Gallaudet University was the first, and is still the only, institution in the world that focuses on educational programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from the pre-school through the doctoral level;

Whereas Gallaudet University has been a world leader in the fields of education and research for more than a century; and

Whereas, since 1869, graduates of Gallaudet University have pursued distinguished careers of leadership in the United States and throughout the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) congratulates and honors Gallaudet University on the 145th anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's signing of the law the legislation authorizing the establishment of collegiate programs at Gallaudet University; and

(2) congratulates Gallaudet University for 145 years of unique and exceptional service to the deaf citizens of the United States and the world deaf community.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 77 into the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 77, which congratulates Gallaudet University for 145 years of exceptional service to the hearing-impaired student community.

In 1856, Mr. Speaker, Amos Kendall, a local businessman in Washington, D.C., adopted five deaf children. He soon learned that there were few opportunities for education for blind and deaf kids in Washington, D.C., so he took it upon himself to do something about the state of education, and he donated two acres of his estate to create a school that would ensure these students a place to learn.

In 1864, President Abraham Lincoln signed a charter to allow the school to confer college degrees. Beginning with just 18 students, Gallaudet University is now the world leader in liberal education and career development for over 1,600 deaf and hard-of-hearing college students yearly. With nearly 40 undergraduate and 12 graduate programs, Gallaudet boasts a strong and diverse academic program. Approximately 90 percent of its courses include an online component, making Gallaudet a leader in technology in the classrooms. Gallaudet is the only institution that focuses on educational programs for hearing-impaired students from preschool through the doctoral level.

Gallaudet is also a world leader in the fields of education and research. It is home to the Gallaudet Research Institute, which is the preeminent source of demographics of deaf youth in the United States. It is also home to the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School and the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, both of which disseminate innovative curriculum, materials and teaching strategies to schools throughout the country on ways to serve children with hearing impairments.

Gallaudet considers public service an integral part of its student life. Just last year, Gallaudet students and faculty served 56,000 people by teaching sign language classes and by providing sign language interpretation at conferences throughout the world.

Gallaudet graduates move on to distinguished careers, including as lawyers, investment bankers, scholars, and entrepreneurs. It is clear that Gallaudet University is providing hearing-impaired students with an unrivaled education, and I congratulate the university on its 145th anniversary.

As a congressional member of its board of trustees, I am pleased to have worked with Senator SHERROD BROWN, who also serves on the board, to introduce this concurrent resolution. I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 77.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 77, a resolution recognizing and honoring the 145th anniversary of the signing of the law that established collegiate programs at the excellent institution of higher learning, Gallaudet University.

It was on April 8, 1864 that President Abraham Lincoln signed a Federal law authorizing Gallaudet University to confer collegiate degrees. The signing of this law finally gave deaf students an opportunity to pursue a higher education in an environment specifically designed to meet their communication needs. Gallaudet is still the only institution in the world that focuses on education programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from preschool through the doctoral level.

As of the 2007–2008 academic year, Gallaudet enrolled over 1,600 students. These students have the opportunity to choose from more than 40 undergraduate majors and have the opportunity to take advantage of a state-of-the-art facility. Additionally, each of these students who graduates from Gallaudet will receive a diploma that has been signed by the sitting President of the United States.

I extend my congratulations to Gallaudet University on the 145th anniversary of its creation, and wish all of Gallaudet's faculty, staff, students, and alumni continued success in their endeavors. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time. I do not know if we have any other speakers on the other side of the aisle, Mr. BISHOP.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. We do not.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Then are you prepared to close?

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, with my profound respect for this particular institution and for the job that they do in creating a service for a specific need that is out there, I urge the support of this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman MILLER and the Committee on Education and Labor for their help in bringing Congressman KENNEDY's resolution to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 77, which congratulates Gallaudet University for the 145th anniversary of the signing of its charter by President Abraham Lincoln.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 77.

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.

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.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 1617, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 730, by the yeas and nays;

H. Res. 182, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY COMPONENT PRIVACY OFFICER ACT OF 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1617, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1617.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 412, nays 3, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 147]

YEAS—412

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Bright
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Flake
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon (TN)
Granger
Graves
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson

Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heinrich
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis (CO)
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shadegg
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Teague
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—3

Gohmert
Lummis
Paul

NOT VOTING—16

Blunt
Braley (IA)
Cleaver
Costello
Engel
Hill
Johnson, Sam
McCotter
Miller, Gary
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Radanovich
Sessions
Smith (NJ)
Taylor
Westmoreland

□ 1353

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR FORENSICS AND ATTRIBUTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 730, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARNEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 730.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 402, nays 16, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 148]

YEAS—402

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Bright
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon (TN)
Granger
Graves
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heinrich
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Maloney
Marchant
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paulsen
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Polis (CO)
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shadegg
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Teague
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Turner
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—16

Akin
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Coble
Deal (GA)
Duncan
Flake
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Kingston
Linder
Lummis
Manzullo
Paul
Poe (TX)
Sensenbrenner

NOT VOTING—13

Braley (IA)
Costello
Engel
Hill
McCotter
Miller, Gary
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Radanovich
Sessions
Smith (NJ)
Taylor
Westmoreland

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1402

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia changed his vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. ROYCE changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 182, 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 182.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 415, nays 0, not voting 16, as follows:

[Roll No. 149]

YEAS—415

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Adler (NJ)
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Austria
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett
Barton (TX)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boccieri
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Bright
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Cantor
Cao
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson (IN)
Carter
Cassidy
Castle
Castor (FL)
Chaffetz
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Coffman (CO)
Cohen
Cole
Conaway
Connolly (VA)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Courtney
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Dahlkemper
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly (IN)
Doyle
Dreier
Driehaus
Duncan
Edwards (MD)
Edwards (TX)
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emerson
Eshoo
Etheridge
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Flake
Fleming
Forbes
Fortenberry
Foster
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Fudge
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gingrey (GA)
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goodlatte
Gordon (TN)
Granger
Graves
Grayson
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Griffith
Grijalva
Guthrie
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Halvorson
Hare
Harman
Harper
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Heinrich
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Higgins
Himes
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hunter
Inglis
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jenkins
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Jordan (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kilroy
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kirkpatrick (AZ)
Kissell
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Kosmas
Kratovil
Kucinich
Lamborn
Lance
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lee (CA)
Lee (NY)
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Luján
Lummis
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maffei
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey (CO)
Markey (MA)
Marshall
Massa
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul
McClintock
McCollum
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMahon
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Minnick
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Myrick
Nadler (NY)
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Nye
Oberstar
Obey
Olson
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pastor (AZ)
Paul
Paulsen
Payne
Pence
Perlmutter
Perriello
Peters
Peterson
Petri
Pingree (ME)
Pitts
Platts
Poe (TX)
Polis (CO)
Posey
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Rahall
Rangel
Rehberg
Reichert
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Roe (TN)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Rooney
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman (NJ)
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Scalise
Schakowsky
Schauer
Schiff
Schmidt
Schock
Schrader
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sestak
Shadegg
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Simpson
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Souder
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Teague
Terry
Thompson (MS)
Thompson (PA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Tierney
Titus
Tonko
Towns
Tsongas
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden
Walz
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (OH)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Wolf
Woolsey
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—16

Costello
Engel
Herseth Sandlin
Hill
McCotter
Miller, Gary
Pascrell
Pomeroy
Radanovich
Sessions
Smith (NJ)
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Turner
Westmoreland
Wu

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1409

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WELCOME HOME VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

Mrs. HALVORSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 234) expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day''.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 234

Whereas the Vietnam War was fought in Vietnam from 1961 to 1975, and involved North Vietnam and the Viet Cong in conflict with United States Armed Forces and South Vietnam;

Whereas the United States became involved in Vietnam because policy-makers in the United States believed that if South Vietnam fell to a Communist government then Communism would spread throughout the rest of Southeast Asia;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces began serving in an advisory role to the South Vietnamese in 1961;

Whereas as a result of the Gulf of Tonkin incidents on August 2 and 4, 1964, Congress overwhelmingly passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (Public Law 88–408), on August 7, 1964, which effectively handed over war-making powers to President Johnson until such time as ''peace and security'' had returned to Vietnam;

Whereas, in 1965, United States Armed Forces ground combat units arrived in Vietnam;

Whereas, by the end of 1965, there were 80,000 United States troops in Vietnam, and by 1969 a peak of approximately 543,000 troops was reached;

Whereas, on January 27, 1973, the Treaty of Paris was signed, which required the release of all United States prisoners-of-war held in North Vietnam and the withdrawal of all United States Armed Forces from South Vietnam;

Whereas, on March 30, 1973, the United States Armed Forces completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam;

Whereas more than 58,000 members of the United States Armed Forces lost their lives in Vietnam and more than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were wounded;

Whereas, in 1982, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in the District of Columbia to commemorate those members of the United States Armed Forces who died or were declared missing-in-action in Vietnam;

Whereas the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War;

Whereas the establishment of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' would be an appropriate way to honor those members of the United States Armed Forces who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War; and

Whereas March 30, 2009, would be an appropriate day to establish as ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'': Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors and recognizes the contributions of veterans of the Armed Forces who served in Vietnam; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness of the contributions of veterans who served in Vietnam and the importance of helping Vietnam era veterans re-adjust to civilian life.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CUMMINGS). Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 234. This resolution before us today establishes March 30, 2009, as a day to honor and recognize the contributions of veterans of the Vietnam War.

As a member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, I have had the opportunity to hear the accounts of many Vietnam veterans. I hear the pride that came with the duty of defending their country, and I hear the anguish that they felt coming home to a country that confused the war and the warrior.

I encourage all Americans to reach out to veterans, especially our Vietnam veterans. Thank them and their families for their amazing sacrifice, understand more about their great contributions to our country, and gain the wisdom of their personal stories of our Nation's history.

There are more than 24 million veterans living in this country today, including 8.2 million veterans that served during the Vietnam War. Of these veterans, 2.6 million served in country.

More than 58,000 members in our military lost their lives in Vietnam. Tragically, American casualties continued to climb after the war, as a result of suicides, substance abuse, and homelessness among these veterans and their families.

More than 300,000 members of the Armed Forces were reported wounded as a result of the Vietnam War. Today, this number also continues to grow, as more and more of our Vietnam veterans are feeling the effects of Agent Orange.

Approximately 20 million gallons of herbicides were used in Vietnam between 1962 and 1971 to remove unwanted vegetation that provided cover for enemy forces during the war. Shortly following their military services in Vietnam, some veterans reported a variety of health problems and concerns due to exposure to Agent Orange. Modern science clearly establishes that the symptoms of many degenerative diseases can take decades to onset.

Too many Vietnam veterans are suffering from conditions that resulted from their service to our country, yet are not considered service-connected by our government. Time is running out for many of our Vietnam veterans. Many have already lost the battle. And those who remain, along with their families, are fighting for their lives every day.

□ 1415

The Vietnam War was a very divisive time, and too many Americans, myself included, confused the war and the warrior. We did not provide the support, the care, the compassion, and the love that our dedicated servicemembers earned and deserved.

Many of our finest leaders, both military and political, have been quoted as saying that they did not believe that the men who served in uniform in Vietnam were given the credit they deserve.

In that spirit, the House of Representatives takes this step to recognize the contributions of brave veterans who served in Vietnam and the continued importance of helping Vietnam-era veterans readjust to civilian life.

So I ask my colleagues to join me in showing our gratitude to those brave men and women who served during the Vietnam War. Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support for House Resolution 234.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his quick consideration of the bill, House Resolution 234, a resolution expressing support for the designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.'' I commend my colleague, Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ of California, for introducing this resolution.

The desire to welcome home our Nation's Vietnam veterans is strong across the country. It has now been 36 years since the American troops left Vietnam. It was March 30, 1973, when the United States Army completed the withdrawal of combat troops from Vietnam.

Last Congress, we passed House Resolution 1231, a bill that recognizes the importance of Vietnam Veterans Day. In that legislation, we urged Americans to recognize the date and participate in local events. Across the Nation, several States have already organized Welcome Home events for Vietnam veterans on March 28 and March 29 of this year. This legislation before us would continue our support for this effort; provide honor and recognition of the contributions of veterans of the Armed Forces who served in Vietnam, and encourages the people of the United States to observe Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 234.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from California, the sponsor of this resolution, Ms. SÁNCHEZ.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 234, expressing support for Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.

I want to thank Chairman BOB FILNER and Ranking Member STEVE BUYER for their strong commitment to all of America's veterans. Their leadership has been instrumental in bringing this important resolution to the floor today.

As a Nation, we honor those who defend us with statues, memorials, holidays, and praise. But as a people, we have not always fulfilled our duty to properly recognize those fellow citizens who put themselves in harm's way to keep us safe and protect our freedom, and no fellow citizens did we let down more than those who served bravely in Vietnam. They came home to a time of civil unrest and social turmoil, a time when opposition to the war too easily turned into opposition to those young men and women who served in it.

Unlike the GIs who served in previous conflicts, many Vietnam servicemembers came home not to a welcome back parade, but to hostility, ridicule, and bitter criticism. This cold reception, in addition to the brutal realities of serving in Vietnam, interfered with some veterans' efforts to transition back into their communities and establish a sense of normalcy. Just when they needed someone to lend an ear or a helping hand, too many found a cold shoulder.

By encouraging Americans to observe Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day, my resolution seeks to provide these heroes the welcome home that they always deserved but that too many never received.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day is the culmination of years of effort on the part of my constituent, Jose Ramos, himself a Vietnam veteran. As an Army combat medic in Vietnam, Jose Ramos was victim to the indifferent and often hostile public reaction upon returning home. It was his personal experiences and those of his fellow GIs that motivated him to work toward establishing a national day of recognition. His work inspired many, including me, to help give Vietnam veterans their long overdue welcome home.

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

Mrs. HALVORSON. The gentlelady is granted an additional 30 seconds.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. While today's resolution may seem like a small gesture when compared to what our soldiers and their families sacrificed, it certainly is, it

will serve to remind us of their service to our country.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join in honoring Vietnam veterans by participating in Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day events in their communities next year. Today, I ask for their vote.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAO).

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 234, to establish a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day. My family and I are direct beneficiaries of the sacrifice and service of the men and women who served this great Nation during the years of conflict in Vietnam.

I was born in Vietnam in 1967, during the most turbulent year of the war and while American troops were engaged in combat there. In 1975, my father, an army officer, was captured by the communist forces and sent to a re-education camp for nearly 7 years. I was 8 years old when I left my home country and came to America to make a new life with the tools of freedom and democracy that this great Nation stands for.

To the hundreds of thousands of veterans who returned from the Vietnam War, I say to you that your dedicated service to your country and mine is remembered by millions every day. I thank you for having fought for democracy and freedom even in the farthest reaches of the globe.

To each of the 58,256 servicemembers whose names appear on the solemn granite wall along the National Mall, I say to you that your ultimate sacrifice will never be forgotten. Your memories live on today through the millions of people throughout the world enjoying the opportunities, liberties, and freedom that you have fought so long and hard for.

Mr. Speaker, as we reflect today on the sacrifice and service of Vietnam veterans, I ask all Americans to consider our servicemembers engaged today around the globe. Currently, in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have nearly 200,000 service men and women serving this Nation honorably. During the course of these conflicts, 4,716 servicemembers have lost their lives and another 33,852 have been wounded fighting nobly to defeat terrorism and to bring freedom and democracy to oppressed people. We thank them and their families for their service, and they will never be forgotten.

As we chart the way forward in these conflicts, it is our obligation to ensure that the gains we and our coalition partners have made are not for naught, and that we continue on the fight to bring peace, democracy, and freedom to these nations that have been damaged and broken by brutal regimes.

Mr. Speaker, while I am struck by the fact that it is only today, some 34 years later, that we are establishing a day to welcome home from the Vietnam War some of America's bravest, I am pleased that I, a direct beneficiary of their service, can take part in this historic event.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. NYE).

Mr. NYE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the 543,000 troops who fought valiantly against communist forces in Vietnam. During that conflict, more than 58,000 brave Americans lost their lives, and over 300,000 were physically wounded. Yet, when our veterans returned home, our Nation too often failed to appreciate the sacrifices they had made on behalf of our freedom.

Thirty years earlier, we opened our arms to the soldiers returning from World War II, but for those coming home from Vietnam we failed to do the same. Instead of respecting their service, our Nation largely shunned these young servicemembers for doing the job that they had, in most cases, been drafted to perform. We did not comprehend nor did we respect the difficulties that many of them faced in transitioning back to civilian life after the horrors they had witnessed in combat.

The legacy of our failure to welcome our veterans home is still with us today. Every night, roughly 154,000 veterans are homeless, and 45 percent of these are from the Vietnam era. To allow those that fought for our safety to live on the streets is a black mark on the history of our Nation, and it is a warning to present and future generations of what must never happen again.

I believe the designation of March 30 as the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day is the least we can do to begin righting these wrongs. And as we do, let us also pledge to honor our commitment to the men and women who served in Vietnam, to give them the full care and benefits that they have earned, and to make sure that no veteran, past, present, or future, is ever forgotten again.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I certainly thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, how amazing, quite amazing that we just heard this testimony and these remarks from our colleague from Louisiana, Representative CAO. But if there is any reason for our colleagues to support this resolution, it is by the words that he just spoke. What an unbelievable story he told. He is a Vietnamese-American, his father for 7 years in a re-education camp in Vietnam, and here he is as a result of our men and women fighting for freedom and democracy and liberty. That is certainly a vivid demonstration of why we need to pass this resolution today. I certainly support Resolution 234, which will designate a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.

My district in McComb County, Michigan, is actually home to I think one of if not the largest chapter of Vietnam veterans, Chapter 154, in the entire Nation.

My husband, a very proud Vietnam veteran, actually flew F–102s with the 509th Fighter-Interceptor group from air bases in both Danang and Saigon. These veterans served our Nation faithfully and with distinction and honor. But, to our everlasting shame, they received a horrible homecoming.

One of the saddest times, Mr. Speaker, in American history was the way that we treated our Vietnam veterans when they returned from combat. Caught in the crossfire of the debate on the war in our Nation, they came home to taunts, insults, and worse. These brave men and women, these great war fighters, these great patriots, these great Americans, they answered our Nation's call to fight, and they fought, they bled, and they died in the service of our country.

Not only did they have to bear their physical and psychological wounds of warfare, Mr. Speaker, but our Nation did not recognize them as the heroes that they were and that they are. There were no parades and no yellow ribbons and no thanks for serving when our Nation asked them to do so, and they stepped forward to defend freedom and liberty and democracy.

These men and women deserved better, Mr. Speaker. And although it has taken many years to rectify the injustice some of our fellow citizens visited upon our Vietnam veterans, today we can honor them, and we should, with a day to welcome them home properly. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial here in Washington is one of the most visited memorials. This wall stands as a reminder that 58,000 of our fellow countrymen paid the ultimate price, and we must never forget them.

We owe our Nation's veterans a debt that can never be fully repaid, but we want to thank them for their service and their sacrifice on behalf of our great Nation, and all of us will continue to work the halls of Congress to ensure that our veterans get the care, the help, the recognition, and the benefits that they so richly deserve. I know that I have a MIA/POW flag hanging right outside the door of my Congressional office, and if you walk up and down the halls of Congress, you will see many, many others displayed here as well.

□ 1430

We can never forget.

And I would encourage every community in America to observe the ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' so that we never forget our veterans' bravery, courage and sacrifice. And today let me say ''welcome home.''

I ask all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the 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. Let me thank the gentlewoman for her leadership. And I appreciate my good friend and colleague, Congresswoman SANCHEZ, and the manager of this bill for your great leadership, as well, in handling this legislation that simply says a huge and overdue ''thank you.'' And so I am pleased to stand on the floor of the House to support H. Res. 234 because I believe I was touched by this experience in this war, recognizing that as I would listen to Vietnam vets, those returning soldiers, speak in a language that we did not understand, talking about the places where they fought, speaking as if they were distant. Now I understand and hope we all understand as Americans that the war of a soldier is America's war. It is not a public-policy war. So we should stand with our soldiers who fight for our freedom no matter where they are.

I am honored today to be able to support this legislation because as a member of the Houston City Council, I joined with former council member Ben Reyes to raise the first POW/MIA flags in tribute to our fallen and missing soldiers in Vietnam. Those flags now stand today in front of the Houston City Hall. And I'm honored to have had the opportunity to be part of it.

Our soldiers deserve this welcome home. And more importantly, they deserve our understanding. So many of the Vietnam vets are homeless. And we should stand alongside of them. For many years, I participated in what we call ''Stand Down'' to bring our soldiers together.

I want to thank the Medal of Honor winners who always come to our Memorial Day service and sing their heart out and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I want to thank Vietnam vets like Antonio ''Tony'' Roman and John Footman, who today serve their country by being part of the Military Order of the Purple Heart working with our young soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, there is no honor—there is no honor that is too high for the soldiers who shed their blood, suffer and, of course, sacrifice on our behalf, those soldiers whose lives are lost, those soldiers who have come back to us, Vietnam vets deserve our honor. Today now we stand to welcome them home. Never will we turn our back. Always the light will be on. We welcome them home.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 234, ''Expressing support for designation of a 'Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.'" I want to thank my colleague Congresswoman LINDA SÁNCHEZ of California for introducing this resolution.

Few groups of Americans have sacrificed for our nation than those who have served in the Armed Forces. The war in Vietnam no longer makes headlines, but for many families it remains a daily reality, and I urge my colleagues to recognize the challenges that the families of these brave soldiers face and support this resolution in their honor.

Mr. Speaker, 2,637,100 people fought through the triumph and tragedy of the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, 58,000 never returned home again! If these now silent patriots have taught us anything, it is that because of these men and women who were willing to sacrifice their last blood and breath, the United States remains a symbol of freedom and a country whose ideas are still worth defending. As a result, these brave men and women memories should be preserved and honored for future generations in this great nation.

It was Edmund Burke who once aptly stated: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." The birth of our nation itself was due to good men who refused to submit to an unjust rule. Time after time, in battle after battle American men and women have not fled from mortal danger, no instead they have rushed towards it. Our brave soldiers built this nation, first with independence, then with the righteousness of eliminating slavery, and finally in the last century they built this nation in the eyes of the world, not only as a superpower, but as a nation that values humanity and kindness over the tyranny of others.

I see this same courage and strength in the eyes of our current generation of soldiers. They bear the burden of a new world, in which the greatest threats against our life and freedom are often unseen. They also bear the hope of a nation and a world that clings to the hope of peace and stability. It was the great statesman Adlai Stevenson who said: "Patriotism is not a short and frenzied outburst of emotion but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime." It is clear that the torch has been passed to a new generation of men and women willing to dedicate their lives to protecting ours. Our nation is truly blessed in so many ways, but our soldiers continue to be the greatest protectors of our blessings.

Because I feel so strong about our men and women fighting abroad and our veterans who served our nation, I will continue to advocate for their rights in Congress, and I urge my colleagues to fight as well.

Mr. Speaker, now is the time for the U.S. government to again fulfill our moral obligation to those who have fought for freedom and democracy. In the State of Texas we have 1,701,118 veterans, in fact in the 18th Congressional district of Texas alone there are more than 38,000 veterans and they make up almost ten percent of this district's civilian population over the age of 18. Yet we often forget about our men and women fighting abroad once the war is over. We must never forget veterans and we must never stop fighting for their rights as they fought for ours.

Vietnam Veterans like Antonio "Tony" Roman and John Footman, who continue to give back to their country and their fellow young military forces by working with the Military Order of the Purple Heart and by standing in the rain or the heat to be there when our Soldiers and Marines return from deployment. I meet with great men from Texas who are Vietnam Veterans, and our newer Gulf War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom—and I see their continuing need for our support.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 234, "Expressing support for designation of a 'Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'."

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. I would like to know if there are any further speakers.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. I have no other speakers at this time.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Then we reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this resolution. It is long overdue. And I encourage Members to sponsor a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day'' in their districts.

I yield back the balance of my time.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HALVORSON. 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 House Resolution 234.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 234, expressing support for designation of a ''Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.''

The very fact that we are deliberating about a ''welcome home'' for Vietnam veterans in 2009, decades after our participation in that conflict came to an end, says it all. Don't get me wrong. Those veterans eminently deserve that welcome, and the thanks for serving our Nation that comes with it. But it remains far too long overdue. Those veterans should have been welcomed home from day one. And yet, as the resolution says, ''the Vietnam War was an extremely divisive issue among the people of the United States'' and so ''members of the United States Armed Forces who served bravely and faithfully for the United States during the Vietnam War were caught upon their return home in the crossfire of public debate about the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War.''

I want to thank those veterans not just for their service to our Nation in Vietnam, but for their service to our Nation upon their return, service that forms the backbone of support for veterans today. As we have confronted yet another divisive war these last few years, we have welcomed our returning servicemen and—women differently, honoring them appropriately and immediately. And that is largely because of those veterans of Vietnam.

As a 24-year veteran myself and as a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, I have seen a remarkable thing happen. Time and time again, I have heard Vietnam veterans—from witnesses at committee hearings and elsewhere—make clear that we cannot let one generation of veterans abandon another. We have to make sure this new generation of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans do not have to go through all the hardships we know all too well are awaiting them if we do not act to prevent them.

Whether it be access to VA health care, the specific mental health issues that some veterans face after the war, the problem of homelessness among

veterans, preventing our veterans from ending up incarcerated, or even the public perception of veterans and the way veterans think about and understand themselves as veterans—we know the dangers that are out there, thanks in no small part to Vietnam veterans working together, and we know we have to act aggressively to make sure we fulfill our commitment to our newest veterans.

For my part, I see no more important task as a member of Congress and of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

But I also have to say, I think something else has started to happen as we as a country have worked to honor and do justice to the veterans of our current conflicts—regardless of how we feel individually about the war itself. I think just as Vietnam veterans have done for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans what World War I veterans did for World War II veterans, supporting the next generation of veterans, I think our society's treatment of our newest veterans has begun a really renewed appreciation for and a different, more positive public perception of Vietnam veterans themselves.

What you all went through when you came home is something that never should be repeated. And it should not have happened in the first place. But it says something about you as a group and America as a society that we have finally, I think, started to move away from the ugliness of that time, and from the stereotypes and clichés about Vietnam veterans.

The new congressional majority that I was a part of forming in 2006 committed to making our military and our veterans an absolutely top priority. And we did that last Congress, and we continue to do that in this new Congress. Last Congress, we passed the largest veterans funding increase in history, increasing pay for our military and providing them with more of the protection they need when they go into battle, passing into law a historic new GI Bill that should do for our 21st century veterans what the original GI Bill did after World War II.

And we will continue that work in this Congress, putting America's veterans first and working to provide them with the care and benefits they deserve.

The debt we owe those who serve our country honorably in the military is never fully paid. But we owe that obligation to our veterans, and it begins with a full welcome home. The Nation can never fully repair the damage done with the failure to immediately and fully welcome home our veterans from Vietnam. But it is never too late to continue recognizing the obligation we owe you, and thanking you for what you have done and what you continue to do.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker I rise in support of House Resolution 234.

Designating March 30th as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" is long overdue.

This day is not only in remembrance of the over 58,000 members of the Armed Services that lost their lives in Vietnam, but serves as a lesson in conduct and appropriate public debate in regards to our veterans.

March 30th, 1973, has taught us lessons that unfortunately will soon be very relevant to the present day.

No matter the various views of the war in Iraq, I am confident that our servicemen and women will return home to an atmosphere of appreciation and reception.

Unfortunately, the 543,000 troops that returned from Vietnam did not all receive the same respect, but their legacy has ensured a brighter future and degree of tolerance exercised towards the next generation of armed servicemembers.

Mrs. HALVORSON. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to unanimously support House Resolution 234.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. HALVORSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 234.

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.

RECOGNIZING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 55) recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 55

Whereas April 10, 2009, will mark the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8), codifying in law the basis for continued commercial, cultural, and other relations between the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan);

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Taiwan Strait since its enactment in 1979;

Whereas when the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted, it affirmed that the United States' decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China was based on the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act declares that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act states that it is the policy of the United States to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan;

Whereas the Taiwan Relations Act also states that "it is the policy of the United States to preserve and promote extensive, close, and friendly commercial, cultural and other relations between the people on Taiwan, as well as the people on the China mainland";

Whereas the relationship between the United States and Taiwan has strengthened with—

(1) Taiwan's evolution into a free society and a full-fledged, multi-party democracy;

(2) the development of Taiwan's robust free-market economy;

(3) Taiwan's determined effort and collaboration with the United States to combat global terrorism, as demonstrated in part by its participation in the Container Security Initiative and its generous contribution to the Pentagon Memorial Fund; and

(4) the leadership role Taiwan has demonstrated in addressing transnational and global challenges, including its active engagement in humanitarian relief measures, public health endeavors, environmental protection initiatives, and financial market stabilization efforts; and

Whereas Taiwan's democracy has deepened with the second peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another after the presidential election in March 2008: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act as the cornerstone of relations between the United States and Taiwan;

(2) reaffirms its support for Taiwan's democratic institutions; and

(3) supports the strong and deepening relationship between the United States and Taiwan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. 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 resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution recognizes the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act 30 years ago and reaffirms congressional support for that law. I would like to thank my good friend, Representative SHELLEY BERKLEY of Nevada, for her leadership both as co-chair of the Taiwan Caucus and as the chief sponsor of this resolution.

The Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 forms the official basis for friendship and cooperation between the United States and Taiwan. It has been instrumental in maintaining peace and security across the Taiwan Straits and in East Asia. Since the lifting of martial law in 1987, Taiwan has evolved into a robust and lively democracy. The U.S.-Taiwan relationship, once based solely on shared interests, is now based on shared values.

This remarkable political evolution proves beyond any doubt that the notion of "Asian values," often used to justify one-man or one-party rule, is a fallacy. Taiwan's democratic ideals have become even more engrained in its national identity following its second peaceful transfer of power in last year's presidential election.

Taiwan has also developed into a vibrant free-market economy and a major trading partner of the United States. Taiwan's impressive political and economic achievements give it the potential to play a very constructive role in international affairs. I would urge that special consideration be given to Taiwan's desire to gain observer status at the World Health Assembly later this spring.

Taiwan has extremely important social and economic ties with China, and it would benefit both governments to take additional steps towards reducing cross-Strait tensions. The act was enacted 30 years ago with the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined only by peaceful means. It is encouraging that China's top leadership recently stated that it was ready to hold talks with Taiwan to create conditions for ending hostilities and concluding a peace agreement between the two sides.

I applaud this development and urge China to do more to reach out to both the government and the people of Taiwan. I'm confident that the Taiwan Relations Act will remain the cornerstone of our very close friendship with Taiwan. I strongly support this resolution. I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, to start the discussion on our side of the aisle, I'm honored to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida, my colleague, Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART, who is the co-chair of the House Taiwan Caucus as well as a prime sponsor of this important resolution.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my distinguished colleague for the time.

I am honored to speak on this resolution commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. This resolution reaffirms the United States' commitment to the Republic of China on Taiwan and describes the Taiwan Relations Act as the ''cornerstone'' of U.S.-Taiwan relations.

The Taiwan Relations Act stresses the concept of peace through strength. It has served as a key impediment to Communist Chinese military aggression and its attempts at forced reunification under communism with the people on Taiwan.

As Members of the United States Congress, we will do all that is necessary so that the Republic of China on Taiwan continues to have the tools it needs to defend itself. This resolution is especially important because over the past 30 years, through six administrations, Congress has remained a steady and loyal friend and ally of the Republic of China on Taiwan. The strong support of Congress was evident once again by the fact that over 120 Members of Congress rushed to lend their name to this resolution in less than 1 month. As the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act is just a few weeks away, the action by the United States Congress today reaffirms, once again, the close relationship between Taiwan and the United States.

Although the Republic of China on Taiwan has achieved the tremendous economic successes of a flourishing market-based economy and one of the highest standards of living in the world, the U.S.-Taiwan friendship rests on much more than shared economic interests and trade. Our friendship stems from a shared commitment to the fundamental ideals of the rule of law, freedom and opposition to totalitarianism.

The United States of America must never waiver in our support of the Republic of China on Taiwan. We must, and we will, continue to remind the world that Taiwan's security is of the utmost importance to the United States Congress, to the American Government, and to the American people.

I have always had tremendous admiration for the Republic of China, for its history in China and its renaissance on Taiwan. And I look forward to continuing to work to deepen cooperation between the United States and the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to yield 2 minutes to the sponsor of the resolution, the gentlelady from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his extraordinary leadership on this resolution. I would also like to thank the delegate from American Samoa and the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their support on this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the co-chairman of the Taiwan Caucus and as a prime sponsor in support of this resolution and in support of our growing and continuing relationship with Taiwan. Three decades ago, Congress declared that the U.S. would stand with Taiwan against any use of force that would jeopardize its security. We have kept our commitment, and we can now proudly commemorate this historic anniversary marking 30 years of an ever-strengthening U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

For 30 years, the Taiwan Relations Act has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Over that period, Taiwan has transformed itself into a vibrant democracy, holding several free and fair elections along with two peaceful transitions of power. Taiwan is an inspiring story of expanding freedom, a robust capitalist economy and a strong trading partner of the United States. We must do everything in our power to continue protecting it and ensuring its survival.

As Taiwan enters a new era in cross-Strait relations and faces new economic and security challenges, Congress today reaffirms, through this resolution, its commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act, to Taiwan's democracy and to our deep, long-standing friendship.

I thank the gentleman once again.

I urge support for the resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), who is the ranking member of our Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I won't take the whole 2 minutes.

I think everything that is going to be said about the Republic of China on Taiwan can be boiled down to just a few words. They are our true friend. They have been with us through thick and thin. There have been times when we haven't been as good a friend to them as I think we should have been. But they have always been there for us. Ever since they left the mainland and went to Taiwan, they have been a strong free country that has grown into one of the biggest economic countries in the entire world, certainly one of our greatest trading partners.

So I would just like to say that I am very happy to be here to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act and to say to all of my friends, all of our friends in Taiwan, thank you, thank you, thank you for being such great friends.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers on the floor now, so I will reserve the balance of my time.

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Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida, my colleague, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART, who is also a sponsor of this resolution.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlelady from Florida, and also all the sponsors of this legislation.

I rise today in recognition of the 30th anniversary of this landmark legislation, the Taiwan Relations Act. It codifies into law the basis for the continued special relationship between the United States and the Republic of China on Taiwan. Our two nations share so many common beliefs and values. We both cherish freedom, human rights and democracy.

And last year, during the most recent Presidential election, they once again showed that, yes, of course they are a true, vibrant democracy. The Republic of China on Taiwan continues to be our strong ally on the war on terrorism. And they continuously prove that they are a true partner of the people of the United States of America.

Now contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with what just took place a month ago when the Communist Chinese dictatorship sent a number of ships to harass an unarmed U.S. Naval surveillance ship. This provocative action, and many others like it, should serve as a cause for concern when dealing with that nation that regularly violates human rights. Again, that highlights the importance that the people of Taiwan know and

that the world knows the United States Congress stands with this strong and proud democracy.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for this resolution, for having the opportunity to support this resolution, and make sure that our friends in Taiwan understand that Congress stands with them, really stands with them.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the ranking member of our Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, which recognizes the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. This is a historic occasion. Taiwan, of course, is a beacon of democracy in Asia. We have a strong partnership that stretches back over half a century with this country. Today our relations remain strong, as Taiwan is a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy in Asia.

This was signed 30 years ago, and the Taiwan Relations Act laid into the law the basis for the continued commercial, cultural and defense relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan. As this resolution states, it has been instrumental in maintaining the peace, the security and the stability in the Taiwan Straits.

While this resolution highlights many of the positive attributes of the U.S.-Taiwan relationship, language detailing our important economic relationship was regrettably struck. As the original version states, Taiwan is the ninth largest trading partner of the U.S., with United States exports totaling over $26 billion. Imports from Taiwan are important too.

The truth is that trade is very important to Taiwanese security. Security isn't based on weapons alone.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROYCE. I suspect it is wishful thinking with this administration, but I would like to see movement on a trade agreement with Taiwan. Certainly, if we throw up trade barriers, it would do much to destabilize Taiwan's economy. We shouldn't give trade short shrift.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time, so I will reserve to the ranking member.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support as an original cosponsor of House Concurrent Resolution 55. This resolution recognizes the Taiwan Relations Act as the cornerstone of the unbreakable relations which exist today between the people of the United States and the people of Taiwan.

The Taiwan Relations Act stands out as one of the key pieces of foreign policy legislation passed by Congress in the 20th century.

Congress was prompted to act by the decision of President Jimmy Carter to suddenly cut off, as of January 1, 1979, our historic relations with a traditional ally, and to provide nothing further for its continued security nor defensive needs.

Taiwan has stood with the United States, both during the Second World War and in the Cold War, yet little thought was given to the fate of the then approximately 18 million people living on the island. Is this the way to treat an old friend? The response from the House of Representatives 30 years ago was a resounding ''no.''

On March 28, 1979, the House passed the Taiwan Relations Act by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of 339–50. It is this anniversary that we commemorate this coming Saturday and, in so doing, Mr. Speaker, reaffirm our commitment to strengthen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship and our support for the defensive needs of the Taiwanese people.

Thirty years ago Taiwan was put forward as the sacrificial lamb for our own apprehensions, ready to be surrendered to Beijing's unyielding demands. The Taiwan Relations Act put an end to that defeatist way of thinking.

In the three decades since the Taiwan Relations Act, Mr. Speaker, the economic and democratic evolution of Taiwan has been beyond even the most optimistic projections at that time. Taiwan's robust, free-market economy made the island the ninth largest trading partner of the United States in 2007.

Taiwan, as a young democracy with a record of two peaceful transitions of power, is blossoming amidst a sea of Chinese communism. It has become a beacon of hope to all who aspire to democracy in the Chinese cultural world.

Now, more than ever, we must ensure that our robust ties with the people of Taiwan are maintained and even strengthened. Now, more than ever, we must ensure that the people of Taiwan are provided with defensive weapons needed to ensure that no sudden change in the status quo by the use of force undermines their political aspirations. Now, more than ever, we must ensure that Congress is fully consulted on a regular basis on both our overall relations with Taiwan, and our planned future arms sales.

The best means to achieve these goals, Mr. Speaker, is through overwhelming Congressional support for this resolution as a sign of our unwavering recommitment to the Taiwan Relations Act on its 30th anniversary.

Let us send a strong, unequivocal message to Beijing that we are unwavering in our commitment to democracy, to free markets, and to the people of Taiwan. Now more than ever, we must all stand by Taiwan on this important anniversary.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a proud co–sponsor of H. Con. Res. 55 and I want to commend Chairman FALEOMAVAEGA and Ranking Member MANZULLO for moving this timely resolution forward.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join in recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. Since 1979, the TRA's clarity of purpose as the framer of U.S.–Taiwan relations and its singular role in shaping our relationship with the Peoples Republic of China has few equals in terms of foreign policy legislation produced by the Congress.

Under the TRA, Taiwan, and I dare say the mainland, have both prospered and are vastly different places from what they were before the TRA was enacted. The TRA has facilitated Taiwan's evolution into a full–fledged, multiparty democracy with a robust free market economy. And as Taiwan has evolved domestically, its role internationally has changed as well. Taiwan is an active participant in addressing transnational threats and has been deeply engaged in humanitarian relief efforts, addressing public health and environmental protection initiative as well as financial stabilization efforts.

The resolution before the subcommittee today reaffirms the unwavering support of the United States Congress for Taiwan, its democratic institutions, and urges a deeper and stronger relationship between the United States and Taiwan. These are sentiments with which we can all agree, so I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution recognizing one of our strongest partners in business and in democracy, Taiwan. I would like to thank my colleague SHELLEY BERKLEY of Nevada for her continued strong leadership on issues affecting Taiwan, and Asia in general.

Whether you refer to it as the Republic of China, Formosa or Taiwan, this is a free society that has been a beacon of light and freedom in the Taiwan Strait.

April 10, 2009 will mark the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, codifying in law the basis for continued commercial, cultural, and other relations between the United States and the Republic of China, or Taiwan. The Taiwan Relations Act has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Taiwan Strait since its enactment in 1979.

When the Taiwan Relations Act was enacted, it affirmed that the United States decision to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China was based on the expectation that the future of Taiwan would be determined by peaceful means. I truly believe that all of Asia wants the future of Taiwan to be peaceful and that this glorious society continues to be a beacon of light, freedom and commercial opportunity.

My district in Texas is home to a very strong Taiwanese American community, and while I understand that Texas is not known for it's Asian population, it is very vital and an important part of the tapestry of diversity that the state of Texas must get recognition for.

The Taiwan Relations Act makes it a policy of the United States to provide defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. Our continued desire is that these articles remain unused.

The Taiwan Relations Act also makes it a policy of the United States to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other

forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan. That is why we must remain vigilant on what happens in the Taiwan Strait. This is still one of the most peaceful and prosperous areas of the world. It also has one of the most steadily growing populations.

Taiwan's democracy has deepened with the second peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another after the presidential election in March 2008. The new President has made it a point of fostering an atmosphere of peace and.harmony, while seeking to secure Taiwan's place as an economic growth engine. This is particularly important when the global economy is faltering.

The relationship between the United States and Taiwan has strengthened with Taiwan's evolution into a free society and a full-fledged, multi-party democracy and the development of Taiwan's robust free-market economy, with Taiwan becoming the 9th largest trading partner of the United States in 2007 and imports from the United States in that year totaling over $26 billion. Our economic and trading relationship is one of our most important to both Taiwan and to the United States.

Also Taiwan's determined effort and collaboration with the United States to combat global terrorism, as demonstrated in part by its participation in the Container Security Initiative and its generous contribution to the Pentagon Memorial Fund are further evidence of our strong partnership.

I would also cite the leadership role Taiwan has demonstrated in addressing transnational and global challenges, including its active engagement in humanitarian relief measures, public health endeavors, environmental protection initiatives, and financial market stabilization efforts.

These reasons are why it is important that we continue to pursue peace and harmony in this region and why Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made Asia her first overseas trip in her new role. The symbolism is not lost on our Asian partners and why we must support this resolution.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in recognizing the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act and America's commitment to U.S.-Taiwan relations and supporting H. Con. Res. 55.

As many of my colleagues know, the Taiwan Relations Act has been instrumental in maintaining peace, security, and stability in the Taiwan Strait since its enactment in 1979. Over the past 30 years, Taiwan has evolved into a model democracy that respects human rights and the rule of law. It has also transformed into one the world's most dynamic economies and is counted among America's most important trading partners. To that end, it is critical that the United States Congress continue to highlight the importance of the TRA and take further steps to enhance our overall partnership with Taiwan which has been mutually beneficial for generations in both America and Taiwan.

As a member of Congress who believes the United States should foster this relationship and create new avenues of cooperation, it is important in the context of this anniversary to recognize the bold efforts of Taiwanese President Ying-jeou Ma to bring peace and stability to the Taiwan Strait. I welcome President Ma's efforts and the progress he has made to reduce tensions and to extend an olive branch to Beijing. While the issues that separate Taipei and Beijing are significant and the road ahead difficult, it is important for President Ma to fulfill his stated vision and continue to pursue a policy that lays down the ''foundation for a century of peace and prosperity'' in the region.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I was recently privileged to become one of the co-chairs of the House Taiwan Caucus, and I look forward to working to strengthen our country's relationship with Taiwan through the efforts of the Caucus.

Just this week, I was also pleased to have met Ambassador Yuan and Director General Tseng down at the Georgia Capitol where the Ambassador was being honored by the Georgia General Assembly.

I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 55, which commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. As stated in this resolution, the Taiwan Relations Act has served as the cornerstone of America's relationship with Taiwan since its enactment in 1979.

This resolution recognizes ''Taiwan's evolution into a free society and a full-fledged, multi-party democracy.'' As the 9th largest trading partner of the United States in 2007, Taiwan has demonstrated its commitment to work with the United States and to collaborate on a range of issues—especially in regards to combating global terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, Taiwan has also made clear its commitment to give back to the global community through humanitarian relief an other contributions to help stabilize global financial markets.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of this milestone anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in reaffirming our support for Taiwan's democratic institutions and commitment to our strong friendship with Taiwan.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of passage of House Concurrent Resolution 55 a resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. The Taiwan Relations Act's passage in 1979 marked an important law that allowed for continued cultural and economic relations with the people of Taiwan. The resolution we are considering, H. Con. Res. 55, reasserts Congressional intent on this very important relationship. The Taiwan Relations Act helped the United States continue to foster a greater partnership that has resulted in economic benefits and stability for both of our people and that has contributed to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.

I appreciate the partnership that the people of Taiwan have with the people of Guam. The Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office on Guam, Mr. Vince Tsai, has been a valuable member of our island community and I appreciate his office's continued involvement with our local community in many social, business and civic activities. I also want to thank my good friend Congresswoman SHELLEY BERKLEY from Nevada for introducing this resolution and for her continued interest in Asian-Pacific affairs. I believe that this resolution will continue to encourage and foster the friendship and beneficial relationship between the people of the United States and the people of Taiwan, as the Taiwan Relations Act envisioned thirty years ago.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I urge strong support for the resolution, an ''aye'' vote, and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 55, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING 188TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 273) recognizing the 188th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating Greek and American democracy.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 273

Whereas the ancient Greeks developed the concept of democracy, in which the supreme power to govern was vested in the people;

Whereas the Founding Fathers of the United States, many of whom read Greek political philosophy in its original text, drew heavily on the political experience and philosophy of ancient Greece in forming our representative democracy;

Whereas the Greek national anthem (Hymn to Liberty) includes the words, ''Most heartily was gladdened George Washington's brave land'';

Whereas Greek Commander in Chief Petros Mavromichalis, a founder of the modern Greek state, said to the citizens of the United States in 1821 that ''it is in your land that liberty has fixed her abode and . . . in imitating you, we shall imitate our ancestors and be thought worthy of them if we succeed in resembling you'';

Whereas the people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance to the Greek people during their struggle for independence;

Whereas Greece played a major role in the World War II struggle to protect freedom and democracy through such bravery as was shown in the historic Battle of Crete, which provided the Axis land war with its first major setback, setting off a chain of events that significantly affected the outcome of World War II;

Whereas the price for Greece in holding onto our common values in their region was high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War II;

Whereas, throughout the 20th century, Greece was one of a few countries that allied with the United States in every major international conflict;

Whereas Greece is a strategic partner and ally of the United States in bringing political stability and economic development to the volatile Balkan region, having invested over $20,000,000,000 in the countries of the region, thereby creating over 200,000 new jobs, and having contributed over $750,000,000 in development aid for the region;

Whereas Greece was extraordinarily responsive to requests by the United States during the war in Iraq, as Greece immediately granted unlimited access to its airspace and the base in Souda Bay, and many ships of the United States that delivered troops, cargo, and supplies to Iraq were refueled in Greece;

Whereas Greece is an active participant in peacekeeping and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

Whereas in August 2004, the Olympic Games came home to Athens, Greece, the land of their ancient birthplace 2,500 years ago and the city of their modern revival in 1896;

Whereas Greece received worldwide praise for its extraordinary handling during the 2004 Olympics of over 14,000 athletes and over 2,000,000 spectators and journalists, which it did efficiently, securely, and with its famous Greek hospitality;

Whereas Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism, maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel;

Whereas the Government of Greece has had extraordinary success in recent years in furthering cross-cultural understanding and has been consistently working for rapprochement with Turkey, as seen with the January 2008 visit to Turkey by Greece's Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis, the first official visit by a Greek Prime Minister in 49 years;

Whereas Greece serves as a key transit country for the delivery of gas to Europe via the Turkey-Greece-Italy Interconnector;

Whereas Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom, democracy, peace, stability, and human rights;

Whereas those and similar ideals have forged a close bond between Greece and the United States and their peoples;

Whereas March 25, 2009, Greek Independence Day, marks the 188th anniversary of the beginning of the revolution that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire and celebrates the aspirations for democracy that the peoples of Greece and the United States share; and

Whereas it is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate this anniversary with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great nations were born: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) extends warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Greece as they celebrate the 188th anniversary of the independence of Greece;

(2) expresses support for the principles of democratic governance to which the people of Greece are committed; and

(3) notes the important role that Greece has played in the wider European region and in the community of nations since gaining its independence 188 years ago.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BERMAN. 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 resolution.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in support of this joint resolution marking the 188th anniversary of Greek independence. I would like to thank my good friend and our wonderful ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership in ensuring that the House marks this important date.

As the birthplace of democracy, Greece stands alone among nations in its influence over our modern American government. Our Founding Fathers fashioned our society based, in significant part, on the political experience and philosophy of the ancient Greeks.

We stand here in a room today surrounded by images of some of the greatest thinkers in world history, many of them Greek. We stand in a building held up by ancient Greek architectural designs and techniques. And we continue to legislate today under Greek ideals of democratic governance.

From the ancient world of Homer and Plato to the theories of Hippocrates and Pythagoras, we are indebted to the Greek nation for its scientific, philosophical and artistic contributions to the world.

Throughout the modern era, Greece has been one of the United States' strongest allies, supporting us in every major international conflict. Today, our two nations express their mutual commitment safeguarding democracy and freedom through partnership in NATO and through bilateral defense cooperation.

Situated at the crossroads of three continents, Greece holds a strategic position in the Mediterranean region. Over the past decade, Athens has pursued path-breaking diplomacy that has resulted in meaningful rapprochement with its neighbor, Turkey. Last year, Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis made an official visit to Ankara, the first Greek Prime Minister to do so in nearly half a century.

As we commemorate today the 188th anniversary of Greek independence from Ottoman rule, we would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge the rich contributions of Greek immigrants and their descendants to the United States. We hope to continue the mutual benefit of cultural exchange by welcoming soon, Greece, into the Visa Waiver Program.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the beautiful and noble country of Greece on its anniversary, and I join with Americans and democracy-lovers throughout the world in celebrating Greek heritage and our thriving Greek-American friendship.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, to start our discussion, I would like to yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the ranking member on our Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, what we are recognizing here: come tomorrow we have the 188th year anniversary of the independence of Greece. And we are celebrating Greek and American democracy. And that date tomorrow represents the day at which, after 400 years of oppressive rule, Greeks finally became free. Greeks were able, and it is amazing to think about it, to maintain their language, maintain their religion, to hold on to their culture, despite 20 generations of persecution during that period of time.

And I think one of the reasons we are proud here in the United States about the role we played was because U.S. President James Monroe and our then-Secretary of State, Daniel Webster, pushed to send funds and supplies to aid Greece in that struggle. But more importantly, I think to all of us, free-born men, both white and black, born in the North, traveled to Greece during that struggle. They played a role over 180 years ago in securing those freedoms. That was the power at the time of the concept of Greek liberty, that it drove Americans in this early republic to travel to Greece in order to take part in that very struggle. And that struggle, frankly, began an alliance between the U.S. and Greece that has joined our two countries in NATO, that has seen our soldiers fight tyranny in World War II.

□ 1500

We are indebted to the Greeks for their vast influence on our own society. Two thousand five hundred years ago, the Greeks ushered in Western civilization, and they brought about at that time the scientific method. They gave us the philosophy of Aristotle and Aristotelian logic, the birth of democratic government, the first age of reason. They brought forward the poetry of Euripides, the three-dimensional painting that was not rediscovered as a technique until the end of the Dark Ages, until into the Renaissance when again the enlightenment represented, really, the rediscovery of Greek philosophy, of these concepts of the autonomy of the individual, of logic and reason.

Our own founding fathers were deeply influenced by those Hellenic ideas. Thomas Jefferson, Adams and Madison, they not only wrote and read Greek; they could speak Greek—Tom Paine as well. They were well-versed in Greek philosophy.

In crafting the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Jefferson and Madison drew heavily on the Greek ideal that a government derives its power from the people. Thomas Jefferson's stirring words that all men are created equal and are endowed with unalienable rights hark back to natural law theories that originated in Greek philosophy. Indeed, the very architecture of our buildings, the very

ideals that drove our founding fathers through all of this Greek culture permeates throughout Washington, DC and our Nation. It is this legacy that we justly recognize today.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the remaining time to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADLER of New Jersey). Without objection, the gentleman from Florida will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to Ms. BERKLEY, the gentlewoman from Nevada.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today not only as a friend of Greece but also as a proud daughter. My mother's family comes from Salonika, Greece, and I count my Greek-Jewish heritage among my most enriching.

Greece has been a strong ally of the United States, standing by us in our struggles against the Nazis and now in the struggle against Islamic extremism. The Greek people paid a very high price for their opposition to the Nazis, and we are forever grateful for their sacrifices, of which there were many. Greece continues to be a top contributor to NATO and is a leader in the Balkan region.

The resolution before the House today extends its best wishes, our best wishes and congratulations, to the people of Greece, whom we look to as our forebearers in democracy. I am a proud cosponsor of this resolution, but I hope this will not be our last word on our friendship with Greece.

I urge this House and our administration to strengthen our relationship with Greece by including it in the Visa Waiver Program. By approving admission into the program, we will send not only a message of friendship but a message of thanks to the Greek community, which is so deserving of our friendship and of our gratitude. Greece has met the criteria to become a visa waiver country, and only awaits approval of their application. On this anniversary, let us take concrete action to strengthen our bond with Greece and send a message of thanks to our friends and allies.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to my wonderful colleague from Florida, Mr. BILIRAKIS. It is no surprise he is the cochair of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus, and a fine job he does.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great pride and strong support for House Resolution 273, recognizing the 188th anniversary of Greek independence and celebrating Greek and American democracy. I thank my good friend and ranking member, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for introducing this resolution.

Like the American revolutionaries who fought for independence and established this great republic, Greek freedom fighters began an arduous struggle to win independence for Greece and its people 188 years ago. When the Greeks began this glorious revolution after four centuries of Ottoman oppression, they faced incredible odds. It was David versus Goliath.

On March 25, 1821, Archbishop Germanos raised the flag of freedom and declared Greece free. This day of rebellion was not chosen by chance. It was a holy day, dedicated to the mother of God. To the Greeks of 1821, Theotokos was their champion, their savior, their protector. The revolution of 1821 brought independence to Greece, and emboldens those who still seek freedom across the world. It proved to the world that a united people, through sheer will and perseverance, can prevail against tyranny.

By honoring the Greeks' struggle for independence, we reaffirm the values and ideas that make our great Nation. We also remember why freedom is so important. In the history of the Greek war for independence, many Greeks died, but they were undeterred from their ultimate goal. ''Eleftheria I Thanatos''—liberty or death—became their battle cry.

We know the price of liberty can be very high. Democracy can only be maintained at a great cost. Our Greek brothers earned their liberty with blood, as did our American forefathers. The freedom we enjoy today is due to the sacrifices made by men and women in the past. I take great pride in both my Greek and American heritage.

As Thomas Jefferson once said, ''To the ancient Greeks . . . we are all indebted for the light which led ourselves . . . American colonists, out of gothic darkness.''

We celebrate Greek independence to reaffirm the common democratic heritage we share. As Americans, we must continue to pursue this spirit of freedom and liberty that characterizes both of these great nations.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to Mr. SPACE, the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. SPACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 273, recognizing the 188th anniversary of Greek independence and celebrating Greek and American democracy.

This bill is personally significant to me because, like Mr. BILIRAKIS, I, too, am of Greek descent, being the grandson of immigrants who came here from the very small but beautiful island of Ikaria, Greece.

It is significant that we understand in recognizing and in advocating for this resolution that our founding fathers chose the ancient Greek models in the formation of our own Constitution and in formulating and defining the values of freedom, justice and equality. What is equally interesting is that, when Greece attained its independence, it turned to the Jeffersonian democracy that we have in formulating its constitution.

This resolution reaffirms the excellent relationship between the United States and Greece. In its passage, I look forward to continued joint cooperation between these two nations in their mutual quest for peace, justice and democratic principles. Peace, justice and democratic principles are not just words. They mean something.

In this case, it means a renewed interest and quest for peace, justice and the principles of democracy in Cyprus. It means ending the occupation that has lasted for over 35 years. It means this country working with Greece to effectuate that. It means preserving the sanctity and the integrity of the ecumenical patriarch, the spiritual father of nearly 300 million who are Christian Orthodox worldwide.

Ascribing to those principles is what we believe in, and it is what Greece believes in. I look forward to working with Greece in future years as we strive for that justice.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 188 years ago, the Greeks brought forth another democracy, but their philosophy started hundreds of years ago. They did not just bring the world a relentless warrior who was willing to give everything to defend the sacred honor of the Greek Nation, but they brought the world a concept that was novel, because of no other country can it be said that they brought to the world a philosophy that it was the individual that is more important than government, itself, more important than the State, because always before in all cultures the State was the supreme power over the individual. Yet the Greeks had the novel concept that the human being, the individual, is worth more than the State. Because of that seed, democracy was planted, and democracy now flourishes throughout the world with the basic premise that it is the individual who is all important.

So we honor them tomorrow because of their great heritage, because of their great influence on our democracy, but we also honor them because they gave to the world a concept of freedom and worth of the individual that had never before been known to any civilization.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. TITUS).

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a proud member of the Congressional Hellenic Caucus to offer my strong support for H. Res. 273, celebrating the 188th anniversary of Greek Independence Day. I am proud to follow other members of this caucus, and agree with their wonderful comments about this special occasion.

My grandfather, Arthur Costandinos Cathones, for whom I am named, came to America from Greece in 1911. He instilled in me a love of Greece and Greek culture. The Hellenic values he taught me have served me well as guiding principles throughout my career in public service, and he would be so proud to see me today on the floor of the U.S. House.

I have been blessed with this wonderful heritage throughout my life. I have

enjoyed visiting Greece a number of times to learn firsthand about the birthplace of democracy, and these trips have given me a deep understanding of the country's regions, its mythologies, its history, its food, its music, and especially its people.

The U.S. and Greece have always shared a special bond. When the new democracy was formed in Greece, they charged themselves with imitating and resembling American democracy, just like our forefathers shaped our democracy around the ideals of Aristotle and Socrates. Those are the very principles of government I teach in my political science classes at UNLV.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to celebrating this holiday tomorrow with the leaders of the Hellenic community and with the President of the United States. I look forward to working to further strengthen the relationship between the United States and the wonderful Hellenic Republic of Greece.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am proud to both sponsor and rise today in support of this resolution. This measure, as we have heard from each speaker, expresses our support for the nation of Greece as it celebrates the 188th anniversary of its independence, and it also notes the many very positive aspects of our relationship with that country.

There is truly a kinship between the people of Greece and the United States, one that was born from the shared ideals of democracy. Americans, indeed, owe a great deal to the political philosophy of democracy that was born in ancient Athens so long ago in 500 B.C. It was the Greek city-state of Athens that first created the word ''democracy'' by combining ''demos,'' meaning people, with ''kratos,'' meaning power, and so it became the first state in history to introduce and implement the concept of democracy in its form of government.

As they framed our Constitution in the late 18th century, our founding fathers drew upon the principles and the forms of government that had been created in ancient Greece thousands of years earlier. Soon after that, 45 years after America's Declaration of Independence, Greek freedom fighters looked to the young United States for inspiration as they began their work for independence from Ottoman Turkey in 1821. In fact, at that time, one of those Greek freedom fighters praised George Washington and the United States for being the land of liberty in his poem ''Hymn to Liberty.'' That poem then became a rallying cry in the Greek war for independence, and was later adopted as the national anthem for Greece.

□ 1515

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Today, Mr. Speaker, Greece is a strong ally of the United States. It was the only country that fought alongside the United States in every major conflict of the 20th century. The contributions and sacrifices made by Greeks in fighting the Nazis in World War II, in the Battle of Crete and elsewhere, are not forgotten by us today well over 60 years later.

In this new century, Greece has also sought to reinforce stability and peace in her area of the eastern Mediterranean. As evidenced by her position at the crossroads of energy supplies between Asia and Europe and by its efforts to support stability in the region of the Balkans, Greece will play an increasingly important role in its immediate region in the European Union and the trans-Atlantic community of nations.

It is my privilege to have introduced this resolution, Mr. Speaker, recognizing the strong relationship between the United States and Greece and honoring the 188th anniversary of the revolution that led Greece to its freedom. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this resolution.

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

Mr. WEXLER. I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Hellenic Caucus, I want to express strong support for this resolution recognizing the 188th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating Greek and American democracy. I would also once again like to thank my very good friend from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) who has been a leading supporter of U.S.-Greek relations in Congress. Additionally, I want to express my gratitude to the co-chairs of the Hellenic Caucus, Congresswoman MALONEY and Congressman BILIRAKIS, for their efforts in moving this resolution forward.

Having had the honor of meeting with the Foreign Minister of Greece 1 month ago, it is an honor to highlight one of America's most important allies, Greece, and the common commitments to democracy, human rights and laws that bind our two nations. This resolution is an opportunity to praise Greece for its efforts to bring peace and stability to the Balkans, as well as the support Athens has given the United States following 9/11 and our collective efforts on the war on terrorism.

It is not lost on any of us in Congress that Greece was quick to respond to requests by the United States during the war in Iraq and immediately granted unlimited access to its airspace and the base in Souda Bay. Many American ships that delivered troops, cargo, and supplies to Iraq were refueled in Greece.

Close cooperation with our NATO ally Greece continues on a daily basis, and it is essential that Congress and the administration recognize this extraordinary support and express our deepest gratitude to the Greek people and Greek government.

This occasion is not only important in terms of U.S.-Greece bilateral relations, but it is an historic occasion for millions of Americans. As a Member of Congress with a large Greek American community, I am especially pleased that we are passing this resolution today, which also highlights this community's extraordinary commitments to the shared prosperity of our Nation.

It is undeniable that the Greek American community, which includes some five million Americans with Greek ancestry, is the lynchpin in the unbreakable bond between the United States and Greece. As unofficial ambassadors between the U.S. and Greece, Greek Americans have for decades successfully shaped this long-standing friendship and built new bridges to forge closer relations between our nations.

While this resolution recognizes an important anniversary in the independence of Greece, it is also my hope that today's floor debate will be used as a catalyst to promote our ally, Greece's, participation in the Visa Waiver Program. Greece has fulfilled all of the criteria to be included in the Visa Waiver Program, and I urge the administration to act as quickly as possible, along with Athens, to finalize this process and open the door to further enhance the relationship between the people and governments of the United States and Greece.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I congratulate the Greek people on the 188th anniversary of their independence and strongly support this resolution.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Hellenic community as they celebrate the 188th anniversary of Greek Independence from the Ottoman Empire.

After close to 400 years of Ottoman rule, on March 25, 1821, the people of Greece rose up against the Turks and won their independence. March 25th is a date that will live forever in the hearts and minds of Greeks all around the world.

The Greeks have a history dating back almost 4000 years. Greece is the cradle of democracy and its great philosophers were an invaluable inspiration for our founding fathers as they created the democracy we have in America.

We are joined by culture and a deep commitment to shared values. Greek ideals of democracy and freedom continue to inspire us.

On Greek Independence Day, we celebrate the living history of Greek heritage. During the occupation by the Ottoman Turks, they risked harsh penalties, some extreme as death, to teach their children the culture, history, and language of their ancestors. It is this dedication to Greek culture and ideals that led them to revolt against the Ottomans in 1821.

Mr. Speaker, I have the great pleasure of representing a large number of Greek-Americans in the Seventh District of New York. Their influence and active participation in their communities has fostered economic, political, and social growth throughout New York City and I am honored to represent them in Congress.

Generations of Greek Americans have enriched every aspect of our national life, in the arts, sciences, business, politics, and sports.

Through hard work, love of family and community, they have contributed greatly to the prosperity and peace that we all enjoy as Americans today.

Although the anniversary of Greece's independence is cause to celebrate, we must also use this occasion to remember the ongoing struggle for freedom and demand for human rights on the island of Cyprus. The United States and the international community must remain steadfast in our resolve to unify the Greek and Turkish Cypriots who have been divided for far too long.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate my strong commitment to the Greek communities in my district, the country, and throughout the world. Their strength and dedication to democracy and peace in the world has made them an inspiration and model for modern civilization.

I urge my colleagues to join me as we celebrate Greek independence.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Greece on her 188th anniversary of Independence.

The U.S. tradition of democracy was built upon ancient Greek political and philosophical thought. And, the flame that ignited the first discussions of democracy in Ancient Greece, shined luminously throughout the Mediterranean on March 25, 1821.

Fortunately, this anniversary not only marks the creation of a promising, new democratic state, but of a steadfast and loyal friend to the United States.

I am proud to say that Greece has stood by the United States as a strong NATO ally.

A quick and reliable partner in World War II, the Balkans and most recently, Iraq.

And as a leader through its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I would also particularly like to congratulate the nearly 15,000 Greek-Americans of Staten Island and Southern Brooklyn whose strong family ties, established customs and tradition of hard work have added to the character and longevity of my district.

These Greek Americans and their relatives in Greece are a tight community. Their relatives in Greece deserve to have the same level of access for tourism and business travel to the United States that most other European countries have. This is why I support Greece's prompt membership into the visa waiver program and look forward to future global opportunities to partner with our friend and ally, Greece.

On this important occasion I would like say once more: Congratulations.

Mr. WEXLER. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 273.

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. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

REDUCING THE DEFICIT

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

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, the President's budget as recently unveiled spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. We need to stop talking about reducing our deficit and actually go to work and do it.

We cannot continue to put off the tough economic decisions that must be made. In the words of Missouri's Harry Truman, the buck stops here.

It is just plain wrong to pass off more and more debt to our children and grandchildren. Folks back home in Missouri have made it clear to me if they have to balance their checkbooks, then so does Washington.

Unfortunately, the President's budget doesn't do that. Instead, it continues to mortgage the future of our children and grandchildren. I support reducing our Nation's deficit, which is precisely why one of the first bills I filed and sponsored was a constitutional amendment to balance the budget.

Now, let's be clear. Raising taxes is not the way to do that. Putting Washington's fiscal house in order is.

I am urging all of us to remember the buck stops here, not with future generations.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICAN SCHOOL KIDS AND THE LONE SURVIVOR OF WORLD WAR I

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 1918, the war to end all wars was over. It was called World War I. It started in 1914, ended in 1918. And during that time, it was a stalemate until 1917 when the United States entered the war. The United States went overseas to Europe. Those doughboys fought in a land they did not know and for a people they did not know. They broke the trench warfare stalemate, and on the 11th day of the 11th month at the 11th hour of 1918, that Great War was over.

Fifteen million people in the world died because of World War I. And the casualties for the United States? Well, 4,734,991 Doughboys and Marines went over there to fight in that Great War; 116,561 were killed representing and defending our country. They fought in the woods, in the forests of Belleau Wood, the Argonne, and the fields of Flanders. Many of them are still buried in those forests in graves known only to God. When they came home, thousands more had contracted the Spanish flu, and they died here in the United States.

When the war was over, America moved on, and now 101 years later, we honor troops from that last century. We have on the Mall here not far from this Capitol the Vietnam Memorial where we honor the 55,000-plus that were killed; we honor the Korean veterans with the Korean Memorial that has those American soldiers going through a minefield in the snow; and we honor the Greatest Generation with the World War II Memorial.

But in the tall weeds of the Mall, there's a little-known memorial for the D.C. veterans that fought in World War I. It is decrepit, it is falling apart, and like I said, it is in the high weeds. It was built largely because the kids here in Washington, D.C., saved their nickels so that memorial could be built.

But Mr. Speaker, we do not have a memorial on the Mall for all of the Americans who fought in the great World War I. America just never got around to it. So I have introduced the Frank Buckles Lone Survivor Act to expand the D.C. memorial so that it honors all that fought in World War I.

Why Frank Buckles? Because you see, Mr. Speaker, Frank Buckles is the lone American survivor from World War I. He's 108 years old. In World War I, he lied to get into the Army: he was probably 16; he should have been 18. But he went off to war in Europe and drove an ambulance and rescued other doughboys that had been wounded in France. After the war was over, he came back to America. And during World War II, he was captured in the Philippines by the Japanese and held as a prisoner of war for 3 years. And now he lives in West Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, here is a photograph of Frank Buckles, 108 years old. It is taken in front of what is left of the D.C. memorial. And what I am asking Congress to do is authorize the expansion of the D.C. memorial to include all who fought in World War I.

You know, the men that fought there should be honored by America. Even though I have offered this bill into legislation, government bureaucrats are opposed to this memorial, saying we don't need any more memorials on the Mall. That dishonors America's war dead, Americans the bureaucrats never even knew.

But kids across the Nation are answering the call of Frank Buckles. And let me explain. What is occurring is, service-learning projects in schools throughout the country are teaching their kids hands-on about World War I and those that lived and fought and died in World War I. It started in Creekwood Middle School in my home district, and now it has spread to

schools in Kentucky, Connecticut, Michigan and Ohio. And because of that, these kids are raising funds to build this World War I memorial for all that lived and died in this war.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we as a Nation honor all that fought in the four great wars in the last century. And it is a shame we haven't built a memorial to them. But I can tell you something, Mr. Speaker. America's school kids will not be denied because they are the grassroots campaign to build that memorial, and they are raising funds to do it.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more powerful than American school kids that have made up their minds, and they have made up their minds that America shall honor the war dead of World War I, the Frank Buckles and all of those four million-plus that served with him. And we're going to build this memorial whether the Federal bureaucrats like it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN THE EFFORT

Terryville High School, Terryville, CT
Bristol Eastern High School, CT
Kingwood High School, Humble, TX
Creekwood Middle School, Humble, TX
Riverwood Middle School, Humble, TX
Zeeland public schools, Michigan
Buckeye public schools, Ohio
University of Arkansas at Montecello
Michigan State University ROTC Program
Hudsonville Public Schools, Michigan

□ 1530

CELEBRATING THE 33-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE COVENANT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, the covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in political union with the United States of America defines the unique relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States, recognizing United States sovereignty but limiting, in some respects, applicability of Federal law. The commonwealth accordingly enjoys a greater degree of autonomy than most United States territories.

The covenant was negotiated over the course of 27 months, from December 1972 to February 1975, by the Marianas Political Status Commission, made up of representatives of the Northern Mariana Islands and a delegation representing the United States.

The proposed covenant was signed by negotiators on February 15, 1975, and unanimously approved by the legislature of the Mariana Islands District of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands on February 17, 1975.

On June 17, 1975, the covenant was submitted to Northern Mariana Islands voters in a plebiscite. At the time, 95 percent of eligible residents had registered to vote, and of the 95 percent of all registered voters who cast ballots in the plebiscite, 78.8 percent voted to approve the covenant.

The covenant was subsequently approved by this House on July 21, 1975, and by the Senate on February 24, 1976.

On March 24, 1976, President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94–241, enacting the covenant. Some provisions became effective on that date. Remaining provisions became effective on January 9, 1978, and November 4, 1986.

On January 9, 1978, the Northern Mariana Islands Government was established, and the first elected governor took office.

On November 4, 1976, qualified residents of the Northern Mariana Islands became United States citizens.

On May 8, 2008, President George W. Bush signed Public Law 110–229 and gave to the Northern Mariana Islands the seat in Congress that I presently have the privilege to occupy.

Today, Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands mark the 33rd year of the date when the covenant took effect.

The 33 years of our political relationship, Mr. Speaker, has been beneficial to both the Northern Mariana Islands and to the United States, such that the political agreement continues to be celebrated by very proud citizens in that most western part of the United States. I join my people in their celebration and bring their joy to this Congress.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this joyful and historical day with Congress, the Nation and with the American people.

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

THE BUDGET

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express grave concern regarding the budget that the Budget Committee is acting upon this week and which some have proposed be brought to the floor of this House next week.

I would suggest that it is very much in need of dramatic changes and would ask that the leadership of this Congress take that budget back and start over again because a debt of the magnitude that this country is already facing, added to the projected deficit for next year alone, now up to $1.8 trillion, is a staggering sum of money, and it is not something that is sustainable.

We have known this for a long time. In fact, one of the namesakes of the annual dinners that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle hold, the Jefferson-Jackson dinners that are held all across the country, he has been known throughout American history for his strong stand against piling on greater and greater public debt. In fact, late in his life he said, ''There does not exist an engine so corruptive of the government and so demoralizing of the Nation as a public debt. It will bring on us more ruin at home than all the enemies from abroad.'' And we are, in fact, seeing this statement made long ago coming to haunt us in very severe ways at this time in our history.

You know, we had up until last year a $9 trillion national debt that had been accumulated over more than 200 years of our Nation's history. And yet the projection now is that in the next 10 years, according to this budget—and that is based upon optimistic projections I would say with regard to government spending—the liabilities the government already has for a number of different programs, but the projection already offered by the administration is that that debt will increase by one-and-a-half times in the next 10 years.

That is staggering to consider that we could outstrip all of the spending that has taken place over all of that period of time in such a short period of time, and I want to show you exactly how that works with this chart.

This chart shows the doubling of the debt held by the public in a very short period of time. Projections now are that it will be even greater than this. This one shows that it grows to $16 trillion. We now have a new projection that says $23 trillion will be the national debt in total.

The public portion of the national debt, that portion of the debt that we owe to American citizens and other people around the world, will grow to $16 trillion from less than $6 trillion just last year. That is a stunning figure, but this doesn't even tell the whole story because what this shows is just the public portion of the debt.

Every year, the Congress borrows from the Social Security trust fund, and other trust funds, additional funds, and the government simply puts an IOU in those trust funds, funds so important to our senior citizens and others who are counting on those funds to be there in the future, to make sure that Social Security and other programs are actuarially sound, and yet the money has been borrowed, such that the total amount of our national debt by 2019 will come to $23 trillion.

We have in this budget that has been offered in this Congress too much spending, too much taxation and, what we're focusing on today, too much debt. Let me call the words of President Jefferson to mind again: To preserve the independence of the people, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty or profusion and servitude—and that is

truly the crossroads that we have reached today.

Thomas Jefferson recognized that 190-plus years ago and pointed out that with economy comes liberty and freedom. With as he called it profusion, or what we call today big government spending, comes servitude of the people to their government. That is not what our Founding Fathers intended when they created the United States Constitution which, in my opinion, is in need of one change that is vitally needed, and that is a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution.

I will have more to say about this in the future, but I urge my colleagues to oppose this budget and support real fiscal reform, which would be to adopt a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

ADMINISTRATION DESERVES PRAISE FOR NEW IRAN AND STOP-LOSS POLICIES

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, I rise to call the House's attention to two very positive developments in the administration's handling of foreign policy and military affairs.

First, the administration offered Iran a new beginning in relations between our two countries. He did that on Friday. It was part of his message to the Iranian people and to their leaders on the occasion of the Persian new year.

The President said, ''My administration is now committed to diplomacy that addresses the full range of issues before us, and Iran, and to pursuing constructive ties among the United States, Iran, and the international community. This process will not be advanced by threats. We seek, instead, engagement that is honest and grounded in mutual respect.''

Mr. Speaker, President Obama is determined to settle differences with Iran peacefully. Of course, I don't have any, nor should any of us have any, illusions that it will be easy to reduce tensions with Iran. That's because they continue to develop a nuclear program which could be used to build nuclear weapons.

But I do believe that diplomacy can produce good results over time. A diplomatic effort can begin within the next year, or in the next week actually, when Secretary of State Hillary Clinton attends a conference on Afghanistan in The Netherlands. Iran is expected to attend the conference, and Secretary Clinton could interact with Iranian officials.

The United States and Iran have cooperated in the past over Afghanistan, and this may be one area of common ground. But at the very least, the administration has created an environment where peaceful progress can be made, and I commend the administration for that.

The second development that is positive came last Wednesday when Secretary of Defense Gates announced that he is moving to end the Pentagon's terrible stop-loss policy. Under stop-loss, Mr. Speaker, thousands of soldiers have been forced to remain in the military even after their enlistments have expired.

Ending stop-loss is long overdue. It has been essentially a backdoor draft, and it's one of the policies that has stretched our military to the limit, putting a terrible strain on our soldiers and on their families.

The Army has acknowledged this problem. The Army Vice Chief of Staff told a Senate subcommittee last week that forcing soldiers to take longer deployments has helped produce a ''stressed and tired force.''

Prolonged deployments, Mr. Speaker, which have separated soldiers from their families for these very long periods of time, have contributed to a tragic rise in the number of suicides among military personnel. The Army has confirmed that there were 133 suicides last year alone, and that's just the Army.

Another serious problem is that many soldiers who have left the military have not had a happy homecoming. The unemployment rate for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan is 11.2 percent, which is higher than the rate for nonveterans.

That is one of the reasons why I support the administration's economic recovery plan, which actually is the third policy development that we should be talking about today, because this plan will produce millions of new jobs. I would have liked to have seen an even bigger recovery plan to create even more jobs, but Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with the administration on some policies occasionally, and that's stretching beyond where their good intentions are.

I also have to disagree with the administration on some foreign policy issues. But on this occasion, I don't want to go into that. I want to applaud the administration for taking three important steps that can make the world a more peaceful place and that will lift a very heavy burden off our brave troops and their families.

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

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

□ 1545

CAP-AND-TRADE

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

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the urgency that faces the United States—and I hope every single American engages in this debate.

The economy has certainly taken a great toll on the great State of Michigan, where I'm from, and President Obama's recently offered budget, if enacted, is just one more slap at working people of the great State of Michigan and all around this country.

It creates a cap-and-tax program for the first time in this history. Something that used to be free, you're now taxed to use it.

The National Association of Manufacturers estimate this plan will cost Michigan alone 121,000 jobs by 2030. It also increases gas rates by 141 percent and electric rates by 177 percent. What does that mean to you? If you have a $70 per month electric bill today, it's going up to $193 per month just for the enactment of the cap-and-tax program.

If you're paying about $1.91, as you are at the pump today, if enacted, the cap-and-tax program takes that to $4.60 a gallon. Good luck in economic prosperity.

If you're a UAW worker in Michigan today and you happen to work in the great city of Lansing, Michigan, you are already paying a State gas tax, a Federal gas tax. You're paying a tax for your driver's license, a tax for your license tag, you're paying a sales tax on the car which you purchased. You pay a city income tax, a State income tax, and a Federal incomes. You pay your FICA tax.

If you go home and if you enjoy a beer after work, there's a special excise tax on the beer that you consume. You click on your cable TV, you pay a tax for that as well. You sit in your Barcalounger. Guess what? You paid a sales tax on that, too.

Mr. President, more taxes will not solve the problem. It will exacerbate the problem. Working families in this country deserve a break, not platitudes, not kind words, not silver-tongued speeches.

These people are right on the edge of losing their homes, and we're going to enact a tax that makes it that much harder for them to make the very payments to stay in their homes today.

Every time you tax a job like this—imagine this. We build cars. Imagine if the taxes go that much up on just your home ownership costs—your electric bill, your gas bill, when you fill up with gasoline—imagine what happens to the manufacturing base that uses energy. The cost for producing that car goes up.

So you're your paying more for gas a gallon, you're paying more for your electric bill. And, guess what? If you want to go out and buy a car, good luck. The cost of that electricity increase is built into the cost of that car.

We no longer will remain competitive. I tell you what—China loves this idea. India loves this idea. Absolutely. They want to make it prohibitive for us to build anything in the United States of America. And how do we do it in this budget? We increase the budget

by $49,040 per man, woman, and child in America.

Your Congress will have borrowed more money in the past year than the cost of all America's wars combined. One year. You know, the sad thing is we have to go to countries like China, Saudi Arabia, and others and, we have to ask them: Please, lend us money for these programs that we know may in fact hurt the American people here in the very near future.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that President Obama's budget will force the United States to borrow $9.3 trillion. That equates to more than $120,000 per family of four for 14 years—think of this—14 years of groceries for the average family of four. Every man, woman, and child, 14 years of groceries by just the debt that we are placing on our children's heads in the very near future. This is an unprecedented expanse of government at the expense of the future prosperity of the children of the United States.

About 64 percent of the businesses will claim, at this $250,0000 limit—64 percent of those are small businesses. So your diners, the folks that you go and get your auto fixed at—guess what? They're getting a tax increase as well. So not only are they paying all that other tax, they're getting another tax increase to make this whole budget try to work.

At the end of the day, you're still assuming $120,000 in debt per family. What have we done? Where are we going?

We know how this works. And if we can just take a step back, take a deep breath and say, Mr. President, we're with you. But you cannot tax the prosperity of America and our children and their future. You cannot tax so much, you cannot spend so much, and you cannot borrow so much if we want prosperity in the future.

I would hope Americans are paying attention and asking some very hard questions about the future of this great Nation.

IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY IN FINANCIAL STABILITY AND RECOVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to briefly discuss a very important issue. Several Members of the House have been working with the Congressional Black Caucus, the Financial Services Committee and other committees to increase access for minority and women-owned business enterprises. Just this week, a new report was released by the Center for Community Economic Development on ''The Imperative of Closing the Racial Wealth Gap.''

I would like to include the summary of this report in the RECORD.

One of our primary focus areas over the last several months has been minority and women-owned business enterprises' access to the Troubled Asset Relief Program. That is the TARP.

Originally, TARP was designed for the purchase of toxic mortgage-related assets and presented several opportunities for women and minority-owned businesses to participate through asset management, legal, accounting, and other professional services.

Following the announcement of the TARP, Representative GREGORY MEEKS and I convened a meeting of over 60 minority asset managers and officials from the Treasury Department to ensure maximum participation by women and minority-owned businesses. We wanted to make sure that there were real opportunities for participation in the TARP.

As a result, legislative language was placed in the TARP bill describing specific steps Treasury was to take to ensure minority participation. In addition, members from the National Association of Securities Professionals met with Treasury several times and submitted written recommendations on how Treasury could work better with minority and women-owned businesses in the asset management space.

Unfortunately, shortly after enactment of the TARP, Secretary Paulson shifted the focus from toxic assets to direct infusions of cash to ailing financial institutions. This shift became known as the Capital Purchase Program. This shift both cut off major opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses via asset-related services, and opened an opportunity for participation in the way of debt underwriting and other banking professional services.

Unfortunately, these opportunities were never realized as banks that received TARP funds began a cycle of self-patronage, which led to little or no access to TARP contracting opportunities for women and minority-owned businesses. The most egregious of this type of patronage was highlighted through the banks paying themselves to underwrite their own debt.

Yesterday, the Secretary of the Treasury announced a new program aimed at purchasing toxic assets from financial institutions. With this announcement, we have come full circle and a significant opportunity for minority and women-owned businesses to participate has presented itself again. The Public-Private Investment Program could purchase up to $1 trillion in assets.

Members of the CBC's Economic Security Taskforce plan to convene a TARP/TALF Access Summit. The summit will be designed to ensure meaningful participation in TARP through the Public-Private Investment Program. Specifically, we hope to provide opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses and administration stakeholders to learn more about the new program and the capabilities of minority and women-owned businesses, develop short-, mid- and long-term strategies to better facilitate access to TARP resources, and identify specific contacts within the relevant agencies.

Moving forward, I believe this is an important initiative to ensure that we bring diverse talent to tackle the daunting economic problems facing us now.

Mr. Speaker and Members, this is very important. We have billions of dollars that are being injected into our society by way of the TARP program, the TALF program, and even the stimulus program. We have to make sure that these opportunities are open and available to all members of our society who are equipped, prepared, and ready to participate.

If our communities are to pull themselves up by the bootstraps, if our communities are to open up opportunities and create jobs, we cannot be shut out of these opportunities simply because only the ''big boys'' are allowed to play. We must make sure that these opportunities are available to all of the women and minority-owned businesses in our society also.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR NATIONAL PROSPERITY—THE IMPERATIVE OF CLOSING THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP—EXECUTIVE SUMMARY—MARCH 2009

ABOUT THE INSIGHT CENTER

The Insight Center for Community Economic Development, formerly the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC), is a national research, consulting and legal organization dedicated to building economic health in vulnerable communities. The Insight Center's multidisciplinary approach utilizes a wide array of community economic development strategies including promoting industry-focused workforce development, building individual and community assets, establishing the link between early care and education and economic development, and advocating for the adoption of the Self-Sufficiency Standard as a measurement of wage adequacy and as an alternative to the Federal Poverty Line.

This work is part of a national effort to close the racial wealth gap in the United States for the next generation. For more information on this initiative, visit http://www.insightcced.org/communities/ClosingRWG.html. For more information on the Insight Center, visit. http://www.insightcced.org/.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For every dollar owned by the median white family in the United States, the typical Latino family has twelve cents, and the typical African American family has a dime.[1] Wealth is what you own minus what you owe: assets minus debts.

This racial wealth gap has roots in the past, and reaches forward as well: it drains a family's capacity to give the next generation a solid start. Without addressing the wealth gap, racial inequality will be with us for generations to come.

Anti-poverty programs have relied primarily on providing subsistence income for today's necessities, not building assets that lead to economic mobility and security, and in fact have sometimes penalized low-income people for owning assets. Wealth-building policies can help even the lowest-income families gain stability and plan for the future.

Asset poverty is a new definition of poverty that reveals how many families lack even minimal amounts of wealth. It can be defined as not having enough savings to survive for three months without income. People of color are far more likely than whites to be asset-poor. The median family of color has enough assets to last only five weeks at the poverty level, compared with seven months for the median white family.[2]

THE ROOTS OF THE RACIAL WEALTH DIVIDE IN U.S. HISTORY[3]

Throughout U.S. history, federal and state governments have provided ''wealth starter kits'' for some to turn their work into worth. For example, governments have given gifts of land, education, government-backed mortgages and farm loans, a social safety net, and business subsidies to white families, sometimes exclusively and usually disproportionately.

The same governments that boosted white wealth took land from people of color, denied them education, and erected barriers to home and business ownership.

Native Americans lost assets not just during the first centuries of U.S. history, through displacement and treaty violations, but also more recently through tribal termination and Bureau of Indian Affairs mismanagement.

African Americans were not just denied property; they were property during slavery. Legal segregation and Jim Crow laws pushed Black citizens to the margins of the economy, where many remain stuck today. Wealth-building programs such as Social Security and the post-WWII GI Bill at first excluded African Americans, with multigenerational effects.

Latinos have been negatively affected by U.S. foreign policy and immigration policy. Mexicans and Puerto Ricans lost land to conquest. Temporary guest-worker programs and exploitation of undocumented immigrants have blocked many Latinos from getting a toehold in the U.S. economy.

Most Asian Americans were excluded from entry, and those who were here were largely denied citizenship until after World War II.[4] Japanese Americans lost their assets when they were interned during World War II. While some Asian groups are now prospering, Southeast Asians continue to have a very high poverty rate.[5]

Our country knows how to invest in wealth building for its people. We now need to do so for everyone. We cannot afford to squander America's greatest asset: its people.

COMPREHENSIVE ASSET BUILDING FOR ALL

A comprehensive approach to asset accumulation must recognize that wealth building should unfold over the course of a person's life: learning to save as a child; earning more than just a living wage; borrowing on fair terms to invest in the future: buying a home; starting a business; and retiring with security.

To make that possible for Americans of all races, these interconnected policy areas must be improved to support wealth building:

Land: Land loss led to the impoverishment of Native Americans, Mexican Americans, and African Americans, and land ownership will be essential to ending the racial wealth divide. Suits over land claims brought by blacks, Mexican-Americans, and American Indians must move quickly to settlements. Native peoples, including Native Hawaiians, still do not control their own land, which is held in trust by the federal government and the state of Hawaii; they must regain full ownership rights. Land loss due to fractionation must be stopped. Fair access to subsidized loans must be enforced.

Income and employment: Good jobs with good benefits are important wealth-building tools. In 2007 the median household income for African Americans was $34,001, and for Latinos $40,766, compared with $53,714 for whites; about one-quarter of Black and Latino families were below the poverty line.[6] Since then, as the recession set in, unemployment has been steadily rising. Immigrants and other people of color tend to fill jobs with inadequate pay and benefits. Anti-discrimination laws need to be enforced. Unionization should be promoted. Public investment, including jobs in new green industries, should be affirmatively targeted to communities of color.

Savings and investments: The racial disparity in financial assets (cash, investment accounts, stocks, bonds, etc.) is wide: the median family of color had only $9,000 in financial wealth in 2007, compared with $44,300 for whites.[7] Access to banks has been a problem on Native American reservations, in inner-city neighborhoods and in rural areas. Public programs that match savings or provide subsidies for college tuition will allow more low-income people to build assets. Matched savings programs should be tailored to fit the cultures of people of color, such as building on existing saving practices in immigrant and Native American communities.

Debt and credit: Poor credit scores and unscrupulous lenders keep many people of color stuck with only high-interest credit options, unable to access fair credit for college, homeownership or auto loans. African Americans paid an average of 7% for new car loans in 2004, compared with 5% for white borrowers.[8] African and Latino students are far more likely to have unmanageable student loans, defined as monthly payments over 8% of income.[9] A new federal Financial Product Safety Commission watching for discriminatory practices while protecting all consumers is sorely needed.

Homeownership: The sub-prime mortgage crisis is devastating communities of color. Discriminatory and unregulated practices have led to foreclosures and an estimated loss of at least $165 billion in wealth in communities of color.[10] Black and Latino homeowners are now facing twice the rate of subprime-related foreclosures as white homeowners.[11] In the short run, a foreclosure moratorium and a federal program to renegotiate mortgages on fair terms are needed. In the long run, affordable housing must become a national priority.

Business ownership: Fourteen percent of white families but only 7% of families of color owned equity in a business in 2007.[12] The majority of minority-owned businesses have no paid employees.[13] Minority business start-ups use personal savings and credit cards more often, and receive prime bank loans less often, than white business owners. Ensuring greater access to public and private investment capital is essential to close the gap. Government procurement programs can be used to boost businesses owned by people of color.

Social insurance: Laid-off workers of color are less likely to get unemployment insurance than white workers; and workers of color tend to put more into Social Security than they take out in retirement benefits.[14] Fairer rules in both programs would broaden their reach. But the disability and survivor programs are very important to African Americans; these programs must be protected against cutbacks.

The Tax Code: Currently tax policy prioritizes further asset-building for wealthy asset owners instead of helping wage earners acquire assets. The mortgage interest deduction reduces taxes mostly for owners of high-priced homes who are disproportionately white; low-income taxpayers who do not itemize get no benefit. Making the deduction refundable to low-income homeowners would help close the race gap. A parallel rent deduction would benefit many people of color. Taxes on the very wealthy, such as the estate tax, need to be protected and expanded in order to broaden asset ownership to more people.

SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR CLOSING THE RACIAL WEALTH GAP

From the recommendations made above, a number of principles can be distilled. They represent a framework that our leaders must pursue to lay the foundation for the full participation of all members of our society in our economy.

1. Craft public policies to support wealth creation and provide opportunities to move up the economic ladder for all those stuck on the lower rungs.
2. Ensure full participation in programs intended to be universal through program design and implementation measures, targeting those often overlooked.
3. Draw upon the perspectives of experts of color to develop public policy.
4. Expand and enforce policies that eliminate discriminatory practices in the private and public sectors.
5. Promote the collection of racial and ethnic data essential to evaluating policy effectiveness.
6. Support community-wide prosperity through community-based economic development.
7. Recognize that a comprehensive human-capital agenda is needed.

In his inaugural address, President Obama said, ''The state of the economy calls for action . . . not only to create new jobs but to lay a new foundation for growth.'' By giving populations that have endured years of disinvestment a boost onto the economic ladder, we can lay a foundation for renewed national prosperity.

END NOTES

[1] Federal Reserve Board, 2007 Survey of Consumer Finances, ''Full Public Data Set'' (Washington: The Federal Reserve Board, 2009), http://www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/oss/oss2/2007/scf2007data.html.

[2] Authors' calculations of Federal Reserve data.

[3] This section is based on The Color of Wealth, by Meizhu Lui, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer and Rebecca Adamson, The New Press, 2006.

[4] Ibid, pp. 198–100

[5] Ibid., p. 213

[6] U.S. Census Bureau, Income, Earnings, and Poverty Data from the 2007 American Community Survey.

[7] Federal Reserve Board, Changes in U.S. Family Finances from 2004 to 2007: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances, February 2009.

[8] Consumer Federation of America. African Americans Pay Higher Auto Loan Rates but Can Take Steps to Reduce this Expense. Washington, DC, 2007.

[9] King, Tracy and Ellynne Bannon, The Burden of Borrowing: A Report on the Rising Rates of Student Loan Debt, State PIRGs' Higher Education Project, March 2002.

[10] Schloemer, E., Li, W., Ernst, K., & Keest, K. (2006). ''Losing Ground: Foreclosures in the Subprime Market and Their Cost to Homeowners,'' Durham, NC: Center for Responsible Lending; Center for Responsible Lending. (2007). ''Subprime Lending is a Net Drain on Homeownership.'' (CRL Issue Paper No. 14), Washington: DC: Center for Responsible Lending.

[11] Oliver, Melvin L. and Thomas M. Shapiro, ''Sub-prime as a Black Catastrophe,'' The American Prospect, October 2008, 11.

[12] Federal Reserve Board, Changes in U.S. Family Finances from 2004 to 2007: Evidence from the Survey of Consumer Finances, February 2009.

[13] Robles, Barbara, ''Latino Entrepreneurship and Microbusinesses: A National and Border Economy Snapshot,'' AAPSS Blog, October 5, 2007 Survey of Business Owners, 2002 Economic Census, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

[14] Social Security Administration, Hispanics, Social Security, and Supplemental Security Income, Table 7, ''Characteristics of Hispanic beneficiaries of Social Security and all beneficiaries,'' 2005.

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

ECONOMIC SCALE-BACK

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. When I was home this weekend in Johnson City, Tennessee, I met a few small business owners who are really feeling the effects of this economy. These are real people I'm going to introduce you to, not just some abstraction.

One is a fourth-generation owner of Glenn Wynne Paint and Wallpaper Company. Like many responsible small businessmen and women, he is trying to figure out how to keep his company long enough to ride out this economic mess we are in.

He did have 25 full-time employees for whom he provided benefits, including health care. First, he had to cut back on health care, and then he had to eliminate it altogether. Then he cut 15 percent of the workforce, and he reduced it again to 15 employees.

Finally, he cut 10 percent of the pay for all his employees, including himself. He even went so far as to cut out the $90 a month he was paying for trash removal, choosing to haul the trash himself. He also cut out the cable TV in his business.

As he sees it, he's making tough economic decisions on how to keep his company financially stable during this rough economic time. But he is astounded that people in Washington can't do the same thing, especially because help isn't being targeted for businesses like his that really need it. He sees this cap-and-trade tax as one that will just finally put him completely out of business.

Another individual I met has been in business for 35 years and has very, very little debt, which makes it easier for him to survive this crisis. He had to cut his staff from 50 down to 18 employees and cut unnecessary expenses.

What he's mad about is that while he hears talk about wanting to help small business, he still has hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars of fees to pay to OSHA and Tennessee's Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

As he sees it, large employers can afford these fees and weather the storm, but he doesn't see help for small business. He would like to see the government make it easier for small businesses to stay in business by easing up on the regulations when they can least afford it.

Of course, what I had to tell these two gentlemen was that you make too much sense to get your ideas heard here in Washington. We haven't tightened our belts at all, and definitely haven't gotten our financial house in order. We certainly haven't curtailed the unnecessary regulations on small business or reduced their fees to help them weather this economic storm.

It's time we started acting more responsibly and passed legislation that will stimulate economic growth and prevent our children from bearing the burden of this crushing debt we're racking up to pay for irresponsible choices of the present.

On top of this economic stimulus bill comes the President's budget, which spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. That, ladies and gentlemen, may be the understatement of the week.

With a worsening economic crisis in the forecast, you would think we'd be talking about how some of the President's ambitious proposals could be scaled back. In fact, new economic numbers show larger deficits than the President originally predicted—and these numbers are already very significant.

Instead, the administration and its Democratic colleagues are insisting they will press ahead with the agenda undeterred, as though we don't have an economic crisis.

The President is not at fault for the State of our economy, and I know he is sincere in his desire to get us back on track. But it's important he acknowledge the impact of our current economic crisis on his agenda. The recession does impact his ability to spend billions upon billions of dollars to meet his priorities.

I think many Americans would take it as a positive sign if the President told the people frankly that because we're in a recession, we have to scale back some on his agenda and focus all our efforts on restoring economic growth and creating jobs.

The American people will appreciate hearing this because it's what they're already doing. I think they would have much more confidence in our government if we acted just like them.

□ 1600

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. KRATOVIL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of personal responsibility.

Over the last week, we have all expressed outrage over the bonuses paid to AIG executives. The truth of the matter, however, is, this is just the latest example of a lack of personal responsibility that is rampant within our Nation. As we attempt to recoup taxpayer dollars wrongfully used to pay for those bonuses, we also need to recognize that what has happened at AIG is a symptom of a much broader issue affecting our Nation; and, until we as a Nation come to grips with the problem and begin addressing it, we will face the consequences of AIG-like problems again and again.

The lack of personal responsibility in our Nation is not simply apparent at AIG; it is evident everywhere. It is evident in the actions of unscrupulous lenders, making money off of unwitting borrowers, knowing full well these borrowers are being set up for failure. It is evident in the actions of reckless investors who took on enormous debt in the hopes of turning a quick profit, but instead passed their debt along to the American people. It is evident in the corporate executives, who, despite having ultimate responsibility for their failing companies, have absolutely no problem taking bonuses while their own employees, stockholders, and American taxpayers pay the price for their failings.

It is evident in the views of some of our citizens who have benefited from the opportunities that wealth and privilege afford, and yet feel absolutely zero responsibility to assist in providing for the common good.

It is evident in the talking heads on both sides of the political spectrum that intentionally, either for political gain or sheer entertainment, distort and oversimplify complex issues that erode confidence in our leaders and in our institutions.

And, yes, Mr. Speaker, this lack of personal responsibility is also evident in us, Members of the House of Representatives, Democrats and Republicans, who continue to play politics and blame one another for political expediency instead of coming together to move our Nation forward.

In short, the issue is simply not the executives at AIG. There is enough blame to go around, and we all have a part to play in changing the culture of our Nation.

Regardless of what happens in the short term, long-term economic and moral strength of our Nation depends on renewing one of our greatest American virtues, personal responsibility.

A BUDGET THAT SPENDS TOO MUCH, TAXES TOO MUCH, AND BORROWS TOO MUCH

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the American people are witnessing one of the greatest magic tricks of all time. The 2010 budget proposed by this administration and currently under consideration by this legislative body is worthy of being mentioned with the greatest illusions created by Houdini himself.

This budget proposal is on one hand being held out as addressing the challenges of our Nation while taking steps to reduce the deficit. This one hand being shown to the American people reveals the ideas of reducing entitlement spending, partially fixing the AMT, and creating an emergency reserve fund. And while the magician waves his hand and distracts the American people, the other hand is out of public view, and this is where the trick is being played. This other hand contains the real instruments of this budget: More Federal spending on more Federal programs; more taxes on all American families and small businesses; and a Federal deficit higher than in the past 4 years combined.

Simply put, Mr. Speaker, the end result of this magic trick is a budget that spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. This budget proposal increases spending to $3.9 trillion, nearly one-third of the gross domestic product, a rate not seen in this country since World War II.

To put this into perspective, under this budget nearly $1 out of $3 in the entire American economy will be a result of Federal government spending. And what does this huge increase in government spending go towards?

Approximately $1 trillion will be spent on an increase in entitlement spending over the next decade. More than $600 billion will be spent on government-run health care, socialized medicine. And, more than $1.1 trillion will be spent on more discretionary spending, that is, optional spending, with several government agencies receiving budget increases of more than 30 percent.

Now, where does this great magician get the money to pay for all this increased government spending and programs? By picking the pockets of the American public.

Here, again, the great illusionist holds out one hand and claims they will only increase taxes on the rich while giving tax cuts to the other 95 percent of all of us American taxpayers. However, once again, the other hand is hidden away, and this is where the trick happens. The real result of the tax trick in this budget is more taxes on America's small businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you, in these tough economic times, with rising unemployment, is a tax increase on small businesses, the engine that drives our economy, really the best course to take? How about resurrecting the death tax, which this budget does. Is that an appropriate course of action? I think not. I ask, what does an increase in capital gains taxes while cutting the tax deduction for the interest paid on mortgages do to stimulate our economy?

And I am sure that the 95 percent of Americans who are expecting a promised tax cut will find that money useful when it comes time to pay their share of the new $646 billion cap-and-trade—so-called cap-and-trade, I call it cap-and-tax—energy tax that will result in higher costs on electricity, natural gas, home heating, gasoline, and all goods and services in America.

Just looking at my home State alone, with this new energy tax Georgians will see their disposable income reduced by $941; and the State is projected to lose up to 62,000 jobs by 2020. Even Houdini can't hide these numbers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just when the American people think they have seen the finale of this magic trick, they are then surprised with an ending twist. This is a magic twist that will be replayed for their children and grandchildren.

By their own estimates, the current deficit would decrease by half if this administration did nothing and we kept spending constant. We cannot continue this magic trick. We must stop this irresponsible budget that is being proposed by the administration.

OUR CURRENT ECONOMIC CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the Speaker very much for that, and wish to say that I recently entered into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD an account of some of the key legislative history and executive actions that have led our Nation into our current economic crisis, a meltdown of people's accumulated savings, a loss of value in their homes and pensions, a 26-year high in unemployment, and major damage to our financial institutions and their ability to lend.

One of the individuals I talked about was the woman who headed the Commodity Futures Trading Commission back in 1998, in the late 1990s, and her name was Brooksley Born. She was an esteemed attorney, and she knew the field of regulation well. She said we had to regulate derivatives and, if we didn't, we would get in trouble. She was prescient and she was right.

Three of the men that ultimately caused her resignation were pictured on the front of Time Magazine about a year later: Alan Greenspan who then headed the Federal Reserve, Robert Rubin who chaired Citigroup, and Larry Summers who was then Secretary of Treasury.

You know, it is good to remember history so you are not doomed to repeat it. The unemployment figures just announced nationally and for my home State of Ohio reveal the grim situation: The State unemployment rate is marching toward double digits, the city of Toledo is facing a massive deficit that grows with each passing day, and around our district families, businesses, and local governments are struggling to make ends meet.

Let me offer a seven-step restoration program to put our economy back on track.

First of all, we ought to bring the ''too big to fail'' institutions back under control for the sake of the American people. They should never have been allowed to get so big that the failure of a Citigroup that this man used to head or an AIG insurance company, which is much more than an insurance company, or Lehman Brothers could threaten the entire global financial system. These raging beasts have got to be brought back under control; and, last week Federal Reserve Chairman Bernanke said, ''The 'too big to fail' issue has emerged as an enormous problem both for policymakers and financial institutions generally.'' He is right. Job number one should be bringing the big institutions back under control and, in my opinion, breaking them up.

Number two, we should restore the goal of financial security; that is, people should have more equity and less debt, and it needs to be restored at all levels, from our kitchen tables to the government of the United States. Read chapters 8 and 9 of Kevin Phillips' book, American Theocracy. Treat yourself to a real understanding of how we have gotten ourselves into the situation we face today. Form a book club. Think about it.

Number three, we need to restore our national ethic that values savings over debt both in our households and in our government. Our government should set a national standard for prudent and responsible financial behavior for our citizenry and institutions. The fact that JP Morgan could take a dollar of home equity and leverage it 100 times beyond the value of the underlying asset goes well beyond the realm of reason.

Number four, we need to restore the word ''banking,'' ''prudent banking'' to our vocabulary, and excise the word ''financial services.'' And we ought to start right here in the House of Representatives by renaming the committee of jurisdiction what it used to

be called, the Banking Committee. This means deposits and prudent lending must be unwound, separated, and regulated differently from the securitization process for a major portion of economic activity.

Number five, we ought to incentivize the accumulation of equity by ordinary citizens, and I was pleased to see that President Obama's budget includes savings proposals. And, we ought to restore an ethic of service to bank customers by those working in banks, not using them to empty out the limited savings of the American people.

Number seven, we ought to restore the balance of power between Wall Street and the megabanks on the one end of the scale with community-based banks and credit unions at the other end of the scale. We ought to ask Chairman Bernanke for more on that score.

And, finally, we ought to investigate, investigate, investigate. In an article last week titled, ''Then It's Securities Fraud,'' journalist Froma Harrop wrote that law professor William Black of the University of Missouri Kansas City, who is also renowned for his work in ethics, has mounted a campaign for a new Pecora-type investigation here in the Congress. That was a series of hearings held by the Senate Banking Committee into financial wrongdoing at the end of the Great Depression.

Harrop writes, ''As the bottom was falling out of derivatives trading, AIG was reporting healthy profits. That's not allowed under the law. Meanwhile, the company created a short-term bonus system for its top executives.''

Professor Black's call for a Pecora Commission should not go unheeded by this Congress. The issue of securities fraud is not a small matter.

The first order of business is to get the financial system righted so the ship doesn't sink. We owe that to the American people who are trying to hold on to their own dreams.

□ 1615

Then the Congress must launch an investigation like no other into the causes of this crisis. And frankly, it is a conundrum to this Member why that set of investigations has not already begun. We need to learn every detail about what happened and why and bring the wrongdoers to justice so that this never, ever happens again.

Next week, I'm going to offer greater detail about what America needs to do from this point forward. But certainly one of the actions that should be taken today is that the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Securities and Exchange Commission should immediately employ reforms in mark-to-market accounting so that we can actually help our banks begin to lend again, because we can never possibly replace the capital being destroyed every day by mark to market with the infusions from the taxpayers of the United States.

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

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

INVESTORS PARTNERING WITH TAXPAYERS TO BAIL OUT WALL STREET

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. We have been told this would be the most transparent administration in history. And in many areas, they are infinitely better than the Bush administration. Their single greatest failing comes in the area that, unfortunately, is foremost with most Americans today, which is the economy and the bailouts on Wall Street.

Treasury Secretary Geithner has now proposed a new plan. It is a pretty good deal. Taxpayers will put up 95 cents of every $1, investors will put up, well, between 5 and 7 cents. And it is called a nonrecourse loan; that is, these speculators will put down 5 cents on the dollar to bet on certain packages of so-called toxic assets from the banks, buying them from the banks, and they will share evenly in the profits with the American taxpayers, except the American taxpayers put up 95 cents, and the speculators put up a nickel.

It is certain to perpetuate what has been going on on Wall Street, which is making a few people very rich and impoverishing average Americans, and this time through the tax system and putting taxpayers on the hook.

The program is reported, according to the Washington Times, to have been designed by two prominent Wall Street firms, Blackstone, a secretive private equity group, and a company called Pimco, both of whom apparently have very large positions in these so-called ''toxic assets.'' It is reported by the Washington Times that they suggested this to some of their insider buddies in the administration, and the insider buddies presented this to Secretary Geithner, who has been floundering around trying to put details to his program, and now he has found them. So Wall Street has written the details.

Also, according to the Times, Pimco and Blackstone are not only in line to be able to wash some of their toxic assets and to gamble mostly with taxpayers' money on other people's toxic assets, but they are going to be hired by the government to manage the program. What a beautiful sort of circular little system this is.

We need some accountability and transparency. We need a commission akin to the commission named after the collapse in the Great Depression to investigate every aspect of what has gotten us to this point, who has been involved, what laws have been broken, with subpoena power so that some of these people can enjoy, instead of Federal handouts, they can enjoy Federal hospitality in a maximum security prison somewhere.

Plain and simply, I believe the American people are being taken to the cleaners yet again with this particular plan. What is wrong with actually taking AIG and winding it down? It is a so-called ''zombie.'' We are told in vague terms ''it is too big to fail.'' When I asked Secretary Geithner, just about 10 days ago, I read in the Wall Street Journal, Mr. Secretary, that, in fact, we are shoveling money in the front door of AIG because it is too big to fail, the taxpayers are on the hook for over $150 billion to AIG, and now we are 80 percent owners, and they are still paying bonuses to the people who created the problem, and apparently they are shoveling money out the back door to some of the firms who are getting money in the front door, most notably Goldman Sachs. Goldman Sachs has been getting direct infusions of cash from the Federal Government, and now they are going to be made 100 percent whole on their bets with AIG. They were gambling with AIG, betting against other people's securities with these so-called ''credit default swaps.'' So instead of saying, ''tough, we will give you back your bet, but we are not going to give you 100 percent of the amount you were betting on,'' they are getting 100 percent of the amount they were betting on, and meanwhile we are subsidizing them on both ends here through this black box that is called ''AIG'' that is too big to fail, that, gee, it is just way too complicated to explain to you why it is too big to fail and why we couldn't unwind this zombie corporation in an orderly way. Had we done that last fall or earlier this year, then we wouldn't have had to pay the bonuses because it would have been clear the company was bankrupt, and it could have been taken care of and unwound in a much more orderly way. But we are not being given the information about why it is too big to fail and why this is the way to do it.

And when I asked Secretary Geithner, is it true we are giving money to AIG that then they are giving to Goldman Sachs for bad bets they made? I asked if there was something call a ''naked credit default swap?'' He said, ''oh, don't believe everything you read in the Wall Street Journal. It is not true.''

The Treasury has revealed that what I read in the Wall Street Journal was indeed true. These same huge firms that are benefiting from a direct bailout from the government are also getting a second-level indirect bailout on their bad bet. And some of these firms are foreign banks. We are not only bailing out the likes of Goldman Sachs. We are bailing out Deutsche Bank and other foreign interests.

This is outrageous. We need a full investigation, an explanation of what has gone on and what is going on. We need to take legal steps to prosecute any of

those who broke the laws. And we also have to have stiff new regulatory reforms to make sure this doesn't happen again. And none of that is happening, sad to say.

UNPRECEDENTED TAXING AND SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to comment also with the preceding gentleman, my colleague from Oregon. I would agree with him. I think he is 100 percent right. We do need to have an investigation. The American people were outraged last week when they heard about these bonuses. I would agree with the colleague from Oregon. We do need to have an investigation. Who knew what when? And the fingers need to be pointed right here at Members of Congress, Members of the House, Members of the Senate, and also the administration. Who was it that negotiated these payments? We still don't have an answer. The American people deserve to know. We have a timeline. We have some facts in evidence out there. We had Mr. Liddy, the CEO of AIG, in front of the House Financial Services Committee just last week. I sat in that committee. Mr. Liddy, under questioning, I asked Mr. Liddy myself, did the Federal Reserve chair know about these bonuses? Did he acquiesce to them? The answer was ''yes.'' Also the Treasury Secretary. The Treasury Department was involved in negotiating the compensation contracts.

Today in Financial Services Committee, the Treasury Secretary again was sitting at the table before the committee. The Federal Reserve chair was there as well. The questioning came before them. The Treasury Department was involved. The Federal Reserve was involved. And we know that the bill that was brought to this body and voted here in this Chamber, the stimulus bill, the $1.1 trillion bill with debt service, this tremendous historic-spending-levels bill that came before us, that was the smoking gun. Senator CHRIS DODD inserted that amendment into the bill. He claimed that the Obama administration insisted that that amendment be put into the bill, the language that would protect these AIG bonuses. And as a matter of fact, you could call President Obama's stimulus bill the ''AIG Bonus Protection Plan'' because bonuses were simply protected by this bill.

I would agree with my colleague from Oregon. We need an investigation. We need a special independent prosecutor who can look into this and find out the true facts. What did the Obama administration know? When did they know it? What did Members of Congress know? When did they know it? Clearly, this was a government cartel that was protecting these AIG bonuses.

And why do we need to know this? Because the American people have figured out something that Congress is only just now beginning to figure out. Under President Obama's budget, we see that the administration is spending too much, they are taxing too much, they are certainly borrowing too much, so much so that the American people are saying ''I have had it up to here, I can't take it any more.'' And the economy is following suit.

Well, our colleagues are here today to talk about this. They have a lot to say. Joining me right now is a colleague from the great State of Ohio. He represents the people in the 12th Congressional District of Ohio and the great city of Columbus, Mr. PAT TIBERI, the new father of triplets, and I defer now to my colleague from Ohio, Mr. PAT TIBERI.

Mr. TIBERI. I thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for yielding me some time to talk about a very important subject. As you mentioned, as the new father of triplets, looking at this budget is pretty frightening, not just for me, but obviously what I feel for them and my older daughter as we have in this budget an unprecedented level of spending and also some policy issues that are going to cost them and many in my State of Ohio a tremendous amount of money.

So this budget has real consequences on real people. In fact, the chart behind me demonstrates a little bit about that budget and what that budget does to our national debt. This debt, as you see in red, is representing the administration's budget, a staggering number that will go up considerably if this budget, which is being debated in the House Budget Committee this week, presumably on the House floor, next week, if it passes, as it is, this will be the result, a doubling of the debt held by the public. It is unbelievable.

Who is going to pay that debt? It is going to be our children and our grandchildren. They are going to be saddled with unprecedented debt, debt as far as the eye can see.

When I got elected to Congress in 2001, when I was sworn in, you can see where the national debt was. The Republicans and the administration during the last 8 years were criticized for not dealing with that debt in blue. And it went up. And it went up entirely too much. But not nearly as much as it is going to go up if this budget passes. The consequences are devastating to our economy.

In fact, within that budget is something called ''cap-and-trade.'' It is an energy issue to deal with the issue of global warming. But in Ohio, what it will do is devastate our already ailing economy. It will cause people to leave and businesses to leave. In fact, within my district, there is a municipal power company. It will create the loss of jobs as well. Within my district and many other districts in Ohio there are municipal power companies, not investor owned, but owned by municipalities. And one such one has said that it will quadruple, quadruple the rates that their ratepayers pay. Quadruple. Now my mom and dad, who are on a fixed income, will see their electric go up. They will see their gas bills to heat their home go up. They will see their gasoline that they pay for in their 14-year-old car go up in cost. This will be a huge, huge tax increase on them not to even mention the goods and services that will go up, just the energy tax alone.

We on this side of the aisle believe that an all-of-the-above energy approach to solving our domestic energy needs should be debated rather than a cap-and-tax program that will devastate economies like Ohio's economy. It will be absolutely a killer to jobs in our State.

Now the other issue that you may hear about in the next week is spending, that my colleagues and friends on the other side of the aisle are going to constrain spending. Well, here are the facts, the Congressional Budget Office facts. The blue has been the spending over the last 8 years. The red is the spending over the administration's budget. Clearly, we are going to see an incredible amount of new spending.

□ 1630

So the problem in Washington, D.C. is not a revenue problem. The problem in Washington D.C. is a spending problem. There is no such thing as a spending restraint.

Ladies and gentlemen of the House, this is an eye-popping proposal, one that is going to have huge consequences to our economy, to our children, to our grandchildren, to our way of life. We must, we must put a stop to this proposal, and the only way we can do that is with the help of the American people because, quite frankly, this side of the aisle just doesn't have the votes. The other side of the aisle does, and we need the American people engaged in a proposal that will have a killer effect on our economy and one that will have a devastating effect on the future of our children and our children's children.

I yield back to the gentlelady from Minnesota.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman from Ohio's 12th district, PAT TIBERI. The remarks that he is making about the burdens that our children and grandchildren will bear are startling. I had a baby born to my husband and I back in 1987, and I did a study on what the Social Security tax would be on that baby, who is now 22 years old, when he gets to be in his peak earning years. Now, I know that Mr. TIBERI has triplets that were born this year. We are looking at the debt burden on my son, now 22. In his peak earning years, 25 percent of his income will have to be devoted just for the Social Security portion of his tax bill. It is simply unsustainable.

And our concern is that, under President Obama's budget, which clearly spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much, we are looking at a legacy cost that is simply unsustainable. The President is putting together an unbelievable $3.9 trillion budget, trillion dollar, which, as Mr. TIBERI said, will double the debt limit for every man, woman and child in the United States. Double it. We are seeing these numbers go through the roof of the Capitol right now, like nothing we have ever seen. It is like a sugar high. It is as though the people who are putting together this budget in the Obama administration were all staying up late one night drinking 24-packs of 20-ounce Mountain Dews. They are on a sugar high right now. They can't spend enough of your money.

And the message that everyone needs to send to Washington, D.C. is, I can't afford it. My family can't afford it. My small business can't afford the Obama administration's spending habit.

We have this movie that is out now called Shopaholic. This is a shopaholic bill that we have got in front of us, and it is time to let the people know that those who are paying the bill, the American people, have enough debt. We don't need to take this on too.

Joining us now, from the great State of Texas, is someone, Mr. Speaker, that all Americans are familiar with. His name is TED POE. Congressman TED POE is a former judge. He understands that that's the way it is in the United States.

I yield now to Representative TED POE of Texas.

Mr. POE of Texas. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and her comments especially.

Mr. Speaker, we are discussing the proposed budget. And disregard whether it has some good projects in it or not. It breaks the back of the American citizen. And we hear a lot of numbers about how much it is costing and, of course, it does cost too much. But I will try to put it in perspective.

I have four kids, 7½ grandkids. Mr. TIBERI just had triplets. Mrs. BACHMANN's got a handful of kids. And when kids are born, every parent remembers that they are given an arm band, and the arm band usually says who that child is. My kids all had an arm band that said ''Poe kid.'' They're going to have to change arm bands on my grandkids from Poe kids to just poor kid because every child born after this budget passes will have to pay off the debt to the tune of $70,000 a piece. So when kids are born in America, if this budget passed, give them an arm band that says, you owe Uncle Sam $70,000.

Mr. Speaker, that is disgraceful that we are saddling debt on kids yet to be born in this country. So much for freedom. They are going to be enslaved to the Federal Government to the tune of at least $70,000 a piece. And that doesn't count all these other spending programs that we are seeing going to come down the pike later this year.

Maybe we should remember some of the things that Thomas Jefferson said. Of course he helped write, or he did write the Declaration of Independence. He wrote a lot while he was President. Here's a quote from Thomas Jefferson, Mr. Speaker. He said it in 1821, shortly before he died. He said, ''There does not exist an engine so corruptive of the government and so demoralizing of the Nation as a public debt. It will bring on us more ruin at home than all the enemies from abroad.'' Wise Thomas Jefferson. Maybe we would do well to read some of the things that Thomas Jefferson wrote about saddling American taxpayers with public debt. It is worse than our foreign enemies we have got all over the world.

We cannot afford to pay for this budget because we don't have any money. We have spent it all. We have given it to, you know, these banks that can't fail, and all these other special interest groups. So we are broke. So we are going to have to borrow the money. And we are going to have to borrow the money from foreign countries. Number 1 on the list, the Chinese. You know, our good friends, the Chinese. We are going to borrow their money.

It was embarrassing to me, as a citizen, to see our Secretary of State go to China and beg to allow us to borrow money from them in the future. Even they are a little worried about whether we can pay off this great debt that we are incurring and putting on kids yet to be born. It is disgraceful, Mr. Speaker.

And the second thing is, if we can't borrow enough money, the government's answer is, we will just tax them. Tax them to death. You know, the old statement goes, if something moves, regulate it. If it keeps moving, tax it. And if it stops moving, then subsidize it. We are doing all of the above right now. Things that aren't doing any good for the economy, oh, we are subsidizing those. But we are taxing the American taxpayer to death, those that work for a living. And we are also taxing those small businesses.

I want to make one thing clear about jobs. We hear so much about the budget is going to create jobs. Jobs, jobs. Well, we have to define what a job is. There are government programs, and those are not jobs. A government program takes taxpayer money and gives it to different projects to build something. Now, that is not a job because that is subsidy by the American taxpayer to this entity.

Jobs are not created by government. Jobs are not created by government. Small businesses create most of the jobs in this country because, you see, when small business has money, we call that capital, thus the term capitalism. When they have money they hire people. The taxpayers don't have to subsidize that worker, whereas the taxpayers have to subsidize the government program worker.

So let's be clear about that. There are jobs, and then are real jobs. And so we should do everything in our power to help small businesses, because they create 70 percent of the jobs in this country.

But this new budget, loaded down with borrowing, is also loaded down with taxes. And it taxes the producers of this country. Like I said, if something keeps moving we just tax it. And that is the plan.

And it seems to me, this is just my opinion, this whole philosophy that we are moving to in this country is a government-controlled culture, government-controlled society; kind of makes us look like the French socialist society, in my opinion. And I don't think that is what liberty is all about. So maybe we should go back to some basics.

Like most American taxpayers, they don't spend money they don't have. Maybe the government shouldn't spend money it doesn't have. Maybe we shouldn't be borrowing money because we have to pay the debt on it. And we are not going to live to see it, so we are passing that debt on to our kids yet to be born, to the tune of $70,000 a piece. And that ought not to be.

But that's just the way it is.

I yield back my time.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Thank you to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear President Obama's $3.9 trillion plan for the budget, for the American people clearly spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much for our kids and our grandkids.

There is a man that we respect and admire. He hails from West Chester, Ohio, the eighth district. He is the leader of the Republicans in the House, but more importantly, he is the leader on the issue of fiscal restraint for the American people.

He stood right down here in the well, Mr. Speaker, he held up so the American people could see what 1,100 pages of a bill looks like. He held those 1,100 pages and made the incredible statement that not one person in this chamber had a chance to read this bill before we were expected to vote on it. There was no true debate on this stimulus bill that was passed earlier this year, $1.1 trillion. And now the President has a budget for $3.9 trillion that spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much.

Leader JOHN BOEHNER stood on this House and demonstrated to the American people just how massive this is.

I yield now to our leader, a man that we respect and admire, from the eighth district of Ohio, leader JOHN BOEHNER.

Mr. BOEHNER. Let me thank my colleague for yielding, and thank the rest of my colleagues for participating in this discussion about the budget.

Before we get to the budget, you know, when I held those 1,100 pages up and indicated that no one had read the bill, it was pretty clear no one had because if someone had read the bill they would have realized there were 50 words in there that protected AIG executives, to make sure they were going

to get their bonuses; more proof that we ought to actually read what we pass here on the House floor.

The discussion, though, is about the budget. And I have seen a lot of things over the years that I have been in politics, whether it be a Township Trustee in West Chester, or in the State House, or the 18 years I have spent in Washington. But I have never seen a legislative document more audacious, more far reaching, and, frankly, more bizarre than the budget that has been submitted by President Obama, because it does spend too much. It is pretty clear, when you look at the giant increases in spending. But it is not just that it spends too much. It taxes too much. There are nearly $2 trillion worth of new taxes that are imposed on the American people in that budget. Whether it is the national energy tax, for those who would drive a car, or those who would produce something with electricity, or someone who would flip on a light switch, every American is going to pay a higher tax.

But even with all the spending and the much higher taxes, look at what happens. Look at what happens to our debt. Even after $2 trillion of new taxes, the national debt will double over the next 6 years under this proposal, more than what has happened in the 43 presidents that preceded President Obama over the last 220 years.

Now, there was a lot of criticism of President Bush, criticism of the Republicans, that we didn't have a big enough handle on spending. Frankly, I agree. We should have had a bigger handle on spending.

But having said that, over the next 6 years, President Obama's budget is going to make President Bush look like a penny pincher. And look at the debt. And what is going to happen here, with all of this debt that is piled on the backs of our kids and grandkids, means that in about 10 years, 70 cents of every tax dollar that comes to Washington is going to be used just to pay the interest on the national debt, just the interest. 70 cents of every dollar.

So what happens to our national defense? What happens to our Homeland Security? What happens to Medicare or Medicaid, Social Security and all of the other government programs that we have? There is not going to be any money for it, because all of the debt that is going to get built up, interest has to be paid on that debt and the fact is, it won't happen.

This budget, we need to start over. And I had a press conference earlier today where I suggested to the President, why don't we just start over? Why don't we sit down, as Democrats and Republicans, and build a budget that restores fiscal sanity and shows the American people we can work together for the good of our country.

We can't buy our way to prosperity. And that is what this budget seems to believe. And I would hope my colleagues would help each other understand the enormous debt that will be piled up if we allow this budget to go into effect.

And I yield back.

□ 1645

Mrs. BACHMANN. Thank you to the gentleman from Ohio, Leader JOHN BOEHNER. We have tremendous respect for Leader BOEHNER and have great admiration for his courage in leading this effort in fiscal restraint. The American people are begging for fiscal restraint, and Leader BOEHNER has emphasized that to our caucus, and is leading that charge here in the United States House of Representatives.

Also joining us today, Mr. Speaker, is a brand new freshman also from the great State of Ohio, our third speaker from Ohio during this hour. Ohioans represent the heartland of our country. Hailing now from Ohio's Seventh District is Mr. STEVE AUSTRIA, who has a lot to say. He represents the Dayton-Columbus area, and he is going to be speaking to us now as a small businessman himself. I yield now to Mr. STEVE AUSTRIA from Columbus, Ohio.

Mr. AUSTRIA. I thank the gentlelady from Minnesota.

We are well represented here today here in Ohio in this Chamber. There is a lot going on in Ohio, and this budget directly affects us, and I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak today.

Let me just say, as a new Member of this Congress and having served less than 100 days, we have been faced with tremendous challenges and issues before us. I will start out with the second half of the bailout of the financial markets, the TARP bill, which was $700 billion that I felt did not have enough accountability and not enough transparency. The Treasury did not have a specific plan in place when we voted on that bill, and I had deep concerns with that, and I voted against that bill.

The second bill I was asked to vote on was the $791 billion over 10 years, $1.1 trillion stimulus bill that had a tremendous amount of government spending that I felt was not targeted toward where it should be, to small businesses, which are the economic engine of this country. Seventy percent of the businesses across this country are small businesses. We have 900,000 small businesses in the State of Ohio. Yet this plan did not focus on small businesses. It did little to nothing to help small businesses. It was focused on increasing government spending, which I felt was wrong.

We just heard the leader talk about what happens when you don't read a bill, when you don't have accountability, when you don't have transparency, when you don't have a plan. When you don't read a bill, all of a sudden, you run into what we ran into last week with AIG bonuses being paid out of hardworking taxpayers' dollars. Then there was a $410 billion omnibus appropriations spending bill that had an 8 percent increase, or a $32 billion increase, this year when we are asking Americans to tighten their belts and small businesses to make sacrifices. There are almost 9,000 earmarks in it.

Now we are being faced with a $3.6 trillion budget. I think the gentlelady has pointed out very well and right on target that the problem with this budget right now is that it contains too much spending, too much borrowing, which we have already seen in these other bills, but in addition, we are now talking about $1.4 trillion of new taxes that are going to be put on Americans across this country.

There is a cap-and-trade, or what is being referred to as a cap-and-tax, on anything that uses carbon or CO_2. We are going back and are going to raise the estate tax. There is the raising of the capital gains tax, the removing of itemized deductions, the increasing of marginal rates. All of these tax increases concern me in this budget.

Let me tell you, as a former small business owner and as a father of three, I did not come to Congress to begin major spending, running up a deficit, running up debt like we are running up, passing on debt to my three children at home. That is not why I came to Congress. I came to Congress to turn this economy around and to really begin to save jobs, to create new jobs and to be able to sustain those jobs over the long term. I believe it is our small businesses that can do this. I can tell you, as a small business owner, when I look at this budget that we are faced with, I have deep concerns about what is facing me—new taxes, taxes and taxes.

I talked about the cap-and-trade—we have heard that, too—the increase of taxes on those who have incomes of over $250,000 or more, on the so-called ''wealthiest'' Americans of the country. Many of those are small business owners. Over half of those are small business owners in this country. If I am a small business owner and I know I have these taxes coming at me in 2011, I doubt if I am going to be looking at investing in my business and in expanding my business and in taking a risk. I am going to be preparing for that new tax increase that is coming right at me, and I don't believe that is good for our economy. I don't believe that helps our small businesses.

Again, in Ohio, we have over 9,000 small businesses. Seven out of ten of all new jobs are created by small businesses. America's small businesses are the world's second largest economy, trailing only to the United States as a whole according to NFIB. According to a Zogby poll released last week, nearly two-thirds of Americans, 63 percent of Americans, said that it is small businesses and entrepreneurs that are going to lead this country, lead the U.S., to a better future. Well, you know, while we look at what is going on within this budget, it does not make sense what we are doing.

I had an opportunity on Monday to meet with many of our business folks at a luncheon that was sponsored by the U.S. Chamber. We had the rotary

there, and we had the local chambers there. I had a chance to talk with some of our small businesses about this budget and what we are facing, and they had deep concerns. I mean they are struggling right now. Americans are struggling right now. They are making sacrifices. Businesses are struggling to make it from paycheck to paycheck, payroll to payroll. They cannot get financing. They cannot get the credit necessary to keep their businesses moving forward. What are we going to do? We are going to go out and propose a budget that is going to increase spending, increase borrowing, run our debt up to $3.9 trillion on the conservative side, and increase taxes by $1.4 trillion on all Americans. I believe it is the wrong way to go. I think we can do better. I think the American people expect better and deserve better, and we can produce a better bill than what we have before us.

I thank the gentlelady. I yield back my time, and I thank her for the opportunity to speak today.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I think, Representative AUSTRIA, those are wise words, and thank you for sharing those with us this afternoon. I appreciate your work.

Mr. Speaker, we are joined now by a great gentleman and a longtime advocate for the people in his district, the Second District in Tennessee. He has been serving as a faithful Member of Congress for 21 years, Mr. JIMMY DUNCAN, who is a tremendous gentleman, serving the people of Knoxville and the surrounding community. I yield now to Mr. JIMMY DUNCAN of Tennessee.

Mr. DUNCAN. Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

I first want to thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for giving me this time. She has been a real leader in this battle to try to restore some type of fiscal sanity to this government, and I can tell you this:

I represent a little over 700,000 people in East Tennessee. Fortune magazine said in 2000 that the Knoxville area had become the most popular place to move in the whole country based on the number moving in in relation to the fewest moving out. For many, many years now, we have had a tremendous movement in of people from all over the country and, in fact, of many from around the world. About half of the people I represent have moved from someplace else, so I have got a real cross-section of people from almost every State in this country. Over these last few weeks, I can tell you, from spending more time at home than I do up here, that people in East Tennessee think we have just gone almost crazy up here, throwing around trillions just almost in a meaningless, haphazard way.

The gentlelady from Minnesota showed this chart a while ago which says President Obama's budget spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much. No truer words, Mr. Speaker, were ever said on this floor.

The Congressional Quarterly just yesterday came out with a chart, showing that we are going to add $1.840 trillion to our national debt just this year, and then we are going to add another one $1.370 trillion next year and another $970 billion the year after that. In 3-years' time, we are going to add over $4 trillion to our national debt under the most optimistic scenario by the estimate of the Congressional Budget Office.

That comes on the heels of several weeks ago when this Congress—most of us in the Chamber right at the moment voted against it—voted to raise the national debt limit to $12.104 trillion. That is an incomprehensible figure. Nobody can humanly comprehend that much, but we are going to hand over $4 trillion to that. What it means, Mr. Speaker, is this:

In just a few years, we are not going to be able to pay all of our Social Security and veterans' pensions and all of the things that we have promised our own people. I used to say—and I have heard many people say in the last few weeks even—what we are doing to our children and grandchildren is terrible—and it is—but actually, I think now we are doing it to ourselves because I think that, in 10 or 15 years, if that long, we are not going to be able to pay all of these things we have promised our own people. So I think it is really sad what we are doing to the American people because we are spending too much, taxing too much and borrowing too much.

Joe Scarborough said on his national television program just this morning: We are like a doctor who has diagnosed diabetes in a patient but who has then prescribed a diet of cotton candy. He said: We are like somebody making $100,000 a year who has suddenly gone out and bought ten $1 million houses. He said repeatedly something that I have said many times over these last couple of months: We can't afford it. We are spending money that we do not have, and every place in this world and throughout history, when a government has gotten in the position that we are in, you either have staggering inflation or staggering deflation, and one is just about as bad as the other. I don't have a crystal ball to know which one we are headed into. My guess would probably be staggering inflation. What we are doing is reckless, and what we are doing is dangerous. We passed a stimulus bill, and it had some good things in it, but once again, we were spending money that we did not have.

The Washington Post, which favored the stimulus bill, had a front-page story in which they said it was going to mean a massive financial windfall—those are their words—for Federal agencies. Then they had another story a couple of days later in which they said tens of thousands of new jobs would be added on or new hires would be added on by Federal agencies. That is who is going to benefit from this stimulus package—first Federal agencies, then State agencies. So bureaucrats all over the country are going to come out just fine, and maybe a little bit is going to trickle down to everybody else, but this is not who is hurting. This area is one of the wealthiest areas in the country, this Washington, D.C., northern Virginia, southern Maryland area. Yet they are going to receive a massive financial windfall according to The Washington Post.

On Lou Dobbs last week, he said 4 million jobs had been lost in the private sector in the last year alone. Four million jobs lost. Yet government payrolls had expanded by 151,000. Now, because of what we passed up here, government payrolls are going to expand once again.

There have been so many exaggerations over what is going to be done with this money. A couple of weeks ago, a daily newspaper in Montana reported that the two Montana Senators had put out a press release saying that 40 jobs were going to be created because of a $1.3 million portion of the stimulus package. The paper went to that agency, and that agency said: No, we have already got almost full employment. We are going to add two people because of this, and the rest of it is going to be spent on the employees they already have. So I think a lot of people are going to be disappointed over some of this money that we are spending, and we are spending, as I said, money that we do not have.

Now, two of the Members from Ohio—my colleague Mr. TIBERI and the new Member, Mr. AUSTRIA—both mentioned coal and utility bills and things of that nature because it has such a great effect on their State. We have powerful people in this body who are attempting to cut way back and who are attempting, hopefully, to even eliminate coal in this country. Well, I can tell you this: Anybody who is supporting that is going to really hurt the poor and the lower income and the working people because coal provides over 50 percent of our energy in this country today. If we cut way back on coal, we are going to double or triple or quadruple our utility bills, and we are going to hurt a lot of poor and low-income people.

□ 1700

I have noticed throughout the years that most of the environmental radicals and environmental extremists in this country come from very wealthy or very upper income families, and perhaps they don't realize how much they hurt the poor and the lower income and the working people when they destroy jobs and drive up prices. But if they cut way back on coal, that's exactly what is going to happen.

Our leader, Mr. BOEHNER, mentioned another thing. He said that this bill—and we heard a presentation from the ranking member of the Budget Committee just this morning which said that the President's budget has $1.9

trillion in tax increases in that budget. Jim Cramer, the famous stock man—he's on television every night, and he has been a six-figure contributor to the Democratic Party—he described the President's budget as the greatest wealth killer in history. And I will tell you, that is a pretty serious charge coming from that source: the greatest wealth killer in history.

And we just don't have enough people who understand—there is waste in the private sector but a business who continually wastes money cannot stay in business very long. But a government agency that wastes money, they use that as a justification for getting increased funding the next year.

So every dollar we can keep in the private sector is going to do more to create jobs and hold down prices because money in the private sector is spent so much more efficiently than this money that is turned over to government. Governor Edward Rendell, who is a former chairman of the Democratic Party, when he was mayor of Philadelphia, he testified before a Congressional committee and he said government does not work because it was not designed to. He said there is no incentive for people to work hard, so many do not. There is no incentive to save money, so much of it is squandered. That pretty much summed up the reason that money in the private sector is spent so much more efficiently than money turned over to the government. So every dollar we can keep in the private sector will do more to create jobs and hold down prices.

So we certainly don't need a budget that increases taxes by $1.9 trillion. It has been proven all over the world that when you let government get too big, what you do is you create this elite class at the top, you wipe out the middle class, and you create this huge starvation, or underclass, and certainly we have all traditionally in this country had the biggest middle class in the world because we kept our government—it has been very difficult, but throughout history we have kept our government one of the smallest in proportion to the GDP in this Nation.

I know there are some other people who want to speak. So once again, I want to thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for her hard work and her leadership in regard to the fiscal condition of this government. We need more people like her in the Congress, and it is an honor to serve with her, and I thank her for giving me her time today.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I want to thank Mr. DUNCAN for standing strong for restraint. When you have got donors to the other party who are standing up and saying this is a wealth killer, that is a wake-up call. As a matter of fact, we just had one of the former commerce secretary appointees, Senator JUDD GREGG, say of this budget that it clearly spends too much, taxes too much, borrows too much from our kids and grandkids. He said himself that this spending bill will bankrupt America. It will bankrupt our country.

And it caused me to think—I was writing some notes down. I was thinking about the very first Congress. We are the 111th Congress. And I was thinking back to the very first Congress and the founders of our Nation. And I was thinking that they are here in this Chamber, symbolically, and we, as Members of Congress—Mr. DUNCAN who served for 21 years; myself, this is my third year—I think of the first Members of Congress who are here as we symbolically stand on their shoulders and observe their example from the rear-view mirror of history.

And I think about these founders who wrote our Nation's Declaration of Independence to get away from a mother country who abused its taxing authority against the American colonists who then went on to write our great Constitution which was clear as to the limits on government authority. That was the greatest fear that the Founders had was a government that would be tyrannical and reach too far in the pockets and in the freedom of the American people.

The very same day that our founders, the first Congress, passed that Constitution, known across the world, they also passed the 10 amendments to that Constitution. And those amendments were written for one reason. It wasn't to limit the freedom and the power of the American people as individuals, it was written to limit the power of the Federal Government over the individual. And the 10th Amendment, the last of those 10, reserved to the States all power not expressly given to the Federal Government in the Constitution.

This spending bill that President Obama is putting forward to the 111th Congress would shock the founders of our Nation. I believe it would shock them because they might say that they bled and died and sacrificed their fortune and their sacred honor so that what? So that we could selfishly consume material wealth sufficient to bankrupt our Nation? That hardly seems what America is about or what America was founded upon.

Well, Mr. Speaker, joining us now is Dr. PAUL BROUN. He is a great patriot hailing from the State of Georgia. I appreciate Dr. BROUN. He represents Athens, Augusta, and northeast Georgia hailing from the Tenth Congressional District.

I yield now to a great physician, a great friend, a great patriot, Dr. PAUL BROUN.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Promises made, promises broken. This administration has made many, many promises to the American public and has broken promise after promise after promise.

We were promised that wasteful spending would decrease and be eliminated. But what do we see? We see a huge increase in the size of the Federal Government. We have been promised that those wasteful programs of the Federal Government would be cut and eliminated. What do we see? We see a bigger growth of the Federal Government, and we see more wasteful spending and a huge increase in the size of the Federal Government.

We were promised that any bill that has earmarks in it would be vetoed. Well, the omnibus bill—I call it the ominous omnibus bill—was nothing but earmarks. The whole bill was nothing but paybacks to the folks who elected the leadership here in Washington today, and that promise has been broken.

And now we have a budget. Leader BOEHNER was here just a few minutes ago and spoke about the increase of the Federal debt. And I want to make it clear something that he said that is very important to the American people, should be important to the American people. The deficit spending, the debt that has been created with this budget alone, is greater than all presidencies combined. Every one of them combined. This one budget is greater than all of those. We can't continue down this road.

This budget bill is a steamroll of socialism that has been shoved down the throats of the American public. It is going to strangle the American economy. It is going to choke the American people economically.

We have been promised that 95 percent of Americans were going to get a tax cut. We saw that in this recent stimulus bill where the tax cut is $1.10 per day. That's it, $1.10 per day. I'm a physician, and I don't believe in smoking. I think everybody should quit. But you can't even buy a pack of cigarettes for that amount of money.

And not only that, but this cap-and-tax issue that's being proposed in this budget is going to tax every single American family by over $3,100 per family. Let me repeat that. Every single family is going to pay an increase in their cost of living by $3,100 per family. We can't afford that. It is going to hurt the poorest of people in this country. It is going to hurt our seniors who are living on a fixed income. It is going to hurt small business because of this class envy and class warfare that's being proposed by this administration.

We have seen promise after promise broken by this administration. And not only that, we are creating a debt for our future generations so that their standard of living is going to be much less, much lower than ours today.

As Mr. DUNCAN was talking about, we are either going to have hyperinflation or deflation. I think we're fixing to head for hyperinflation. We have seen in the past that gross deficit spending by governments has created hyperinflation to the point that people almost literally had to have a wheelbarrow to take the currency to the grocery store to buy one loaf of bread. That's where we're heading today. Warren Buffet just 2 weeks ago said that we're off the cliff.

I think we're headed towards a marked prolongation of this recession, a deepening of this recession, and very probably a severe depression.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt, when he was spending taxpayers' dollars like a drunken sailor, did nothing but prolong that Depression. That's exactly what this philosophy that's being promoted here in this House and in the Senate across the way and by this administration is going to do.

In fact, the only thing that got us out of the Great Depression was the creation of a manufacturing entity in America to supply the needs for World War II. Are we going to need a world war to get us out of this depression that we're headed towards? I hope not.

But this deficit spending is totally irresponsible. It is unconscionable that we would have this kind of philosophy promoted in this Congress. It is going to hurt the people who can stand to be hurt the least, and that's the poor people, the retirees, those on fixed incomes.

This cap-and-tax policy is going to raise the price of all goods and services: medicines at the drug store, which is going to hurt our elderly; it is going to raise the price of groceries at the grocery store for everybody, and that's going to hurt all of us.

We cannot continue down this road. We have to put a stop to it. The steamroller of socialism that's being shoved down the throats of the American public that's being driven by NANCY PELOSI, HARRY REID and Barack Obama, it needs to hit a speed bump. It needs to hit a stop sign. And the only people in America that could put up that stop sign, that speed bump up is the American public to cry out, No, we're not going to put up with this. We want bipartisanship. We Republicans and Democrats to come together and solve the problem.

And small businesses are going to be hurt markedly by the tax increases, and that's going to cost jobs. We're not creating jobs.

We have been promised by this administration that we were going to invest in our infrastructure. Well, the stimulus bill had only a miniscule amount of the—this huge deficit spending geared towards infrastructure which would, at least, create some jobs in the private sector.

But where are the jobs being created by bigger government? Bigger socialism. Taking our freedom away, taking our money away, taking our future away and taking our children and our grandchildren's future away. Because this budget spends too much. It taxes too much. It borrows too much. And we've got to put an end to it. It is up to the American people to cry out to Members of Congress to say, No, absolutely no. We're going to stop this.

So I encourage people to contact their congressman, contact their senator and say ''no'' to this budget.

And I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. PAUL BROUN. I have such great respect for Dr. BROUN. I appreciate his words. He's made the hue and cry that the American people need to know that this budget is historic by any measure. We would agree. The Obama presidency is historic, Mr. President. It is historic in the amount of debt that will be accumulated.

Leader BOEHNER stood on this floor just a few moments ago and stated that the debt in this country will double in just 6 years. It spends more than all the previous Presidents put together. And Leader BOEHNER said this: He said that when a dollar flows in to the Federal Government, 70 cents of that dollar will be needed just to pay for interest.

This is absolutely unsustainable. Pretty soon we will have currency equal to Zimbabwe's if we continue down this road because of currency devaluation. This is what we're seeing. We're looking at essentially a doubling of the debt under what the Obama administration wants to put together. But what we hear over and over again from the Obama administration, they say this is a debt that we inherited. Is it really? We need to look at the facts.

□ 1715

The facts tell us something different. January of 2007 is when Congress was run by the Democrat majority. Republicans ran it up until 2007 January. At that point, both the House and the Senate took over and were run by the Democrats. At that point, we saw the Federal deficit begin to rise and skyrocket. Discretionary spending was rising and then skyrocketing, and mandatory spending was rising and skyrocketing. We had the stimulus bill that was passed, an over $152 billion.

Speaker of the House PELOSI, Majority Leader REID and Senator Obama all voted ''yes'' for every one of these spending measures that has gotten us into the place we're in. Did they inherit this mess or did they help create this mess? The American people need to decide.

We have been down this road before. As a matter of fact, President Roosevelt's Treasury Secretary said it best when he said, ''We have tried spending money. We are spending more than we have ever spent before and it does not work. I say after 8 years of the administration we have just as much unemployment as when we started and an enormous debt to boot!''

Mr. Speaker, we've been down this road before. We've all heard the saying that, if you don't learn from history, you are doomed to repeat it. Unfortunately, the Obama administration appears to making that same mistake.

Now, to speak to the American people is great man, a wonderful physician, a man I'm just getting to know. His name is Dr. JOHN FLEMING. He's serving the people of Louisiana's Fourth District from the big city of Minden, Louisiana. He's a freshman, and Dr. JOHN FLEMING has been a physician for 32 years and also a small business owner.

And I yield, Mr. Speaker, to Dr. FLEMING.

Mr. FLEMING. Well, I want to thank the gentlelady from Minnesota. Thank you for your work and leadership, particularly in this area. And by the way, I love watching you speak because I think I can learn a lot of tips from you. So I do appreciate that.

I also want to reflect on my colleague from Georgia that just spoke, a physician, who made a lot of good comments about the tilt that we have right now going towards socialism, certainly liberal socialism at the very least.

You know, it's true, Mr. Speaker, that we've spent in this bill and prior bills over the last 2 months, it's evident that our government is spending too much, taxing too much, and borrowing way too much. Remember, that the Congress just passed a $787 billion stimulus package, $410 billion omnibus appropriations bill loaded with over 9,000 earmarks, and remember, our President promised that he would not support earmarks. Now the administration has unveiled a $3.6 trillion Federal spending plan, a spending plan that the nonpartisan CBO, Congressional Budget Office, has now determined will produce $2.3 trillion of more red ink than the President initially predicted.

I want to turn the camera and the people across America to this picture here and explain really what it is. These are kids in Germany in 1923, and they're stacking what looks like bricks. What they are, in fact, stacking is their currency. That's Deutsche notes right there, and in 1923, the value of the currency in Germany as a result of cranking out money, cranking out money, printing paper to pay back war reparations they couldn't pay back, it made the currency so dilute that it took a wheelbarrow, literally a wheelbarrow of cash just to buy a loaf of bread. That's just how bad inflation can be, and we all know the end of that story. It ended up into Nazi Germany.

I also bring your attention to this. This is, believe it or not, a $10 billion bill. It can be found in Zimbabwe, the same problem, trying to solve their fiscal problems by printing more money. And if you keep printing more, you get a situation like this where a $10 billion bill is required to buy an egg. Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's what this bill will buy. However, that's only a few weeks ago. Today, they have something—in my hand, you can see a $100 trillion bill, believe it or not. And what is it worth? The same value as confetti.

Now, we might think, well, these kind of tragedies cannot happen to us in America. Well, is that true? Just today, the Chinese announced that they do not like our dollar. They feel like that even though they're one of our largest debtors, they no longer trust us in our debt.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from

New Jersey's Seventh, Mr. LEONARD LANCE.

Mr. LANCE. Thank you very much, and thank you for taking the lead on this extremely important issue.

Overspending and over-taxation are terrible factors in the American economy today, but from my perspective the worst factor is levels of debt, and I think that this is, in effect, generational theft.

The Congressional Budget Office, in calculating the proposals of the Obama administration, indicate that spending will hit about 28.5 percent of GDP during fiscal year 2009, and this is a record amount. CBO also estimates that next year spending will be 25.5 percent and at 23 and 24 percent over the course of the next decade.

As someone who tries to be a student of American history, over the last 40 years, the level of debt has been roughly 20 percent, and this is an historic average. And yet over the course of next several years we increase this dramatically. Let me repeat the figures: 28.5 percent in this fiscal year, and similar amounts in the next 2 fiscal years.

I believe that this spending is too great, and I hope that the administration will review its budget and working in a bipartisan capacity to bring this amount down.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 146, OMNIBUS PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2009

Mr. POLIS (during the special order of Mrs. BACHMANN), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111–51) on the resolution (H. Res. 280) providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 146) to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program for the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1404, FEDERAL LAND ASSISTANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. POLIS (during the special order of Mrs. BACHMANN), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111–52) on the resolution (H. Res. 281) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1404) to authorize a supplemental funding source for catastrophic emergency wildland fire suppression activities on Department of the Interior and National Forest System lands, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a cohesive wildland fire management strategy, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

COLON CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, I don't come to the House floor very often to speak. In fact, last year I addressed this body only a handful of times. I think that I am much more effective in representing my constituents by developing relationships in a personal setting rather than arguing my viewpoint on the House floor. But today marks a special time of year.

Mr. Speaker, the month of March is colon cancer awareness month. I think that it's only fitting that the month of March, a month where Congress has the most legislative work days, is devoted to an illness that is often relegated to the back burner of cancer awareness. Obviously, colon cancer is not an issue that garners a lot of headlines, but colon cancer has had a dramatic effect on my life, as it has millions of Americans.

I bring a picture of my mom up. Eleven years ago, my mom died of colon cancer. She was a vibrant woman. She was filled with joy. She was filled with optimism. This horrendous disease took her from Earth far too early. Because of colon cancer, she never had the opportunity to hold her granddaughter. She never had the opportunity to attend my wedding and see me marry my beautiful wife, Andrea. It's a tragedy that has forever left a void in my life.

You know, she was like so many mothers. She was always so proud of her son. She was always pushing me. She always cared about my grades. She always cared about how I did in school. And I was probably not the best student but she kept after me. She kept telling me how smart I was, and she kept pushing me.

The last memory I have of my mother is in a hospital room dying from this disease. She didn't get to see me become a Congressman. And like all Americans who have felt the pain and fear that comes with losing a loved one to cancer, I wouldn't wish that grief on anyone.

The reality, Mr. Speaker, is that I am not alone. This disease kills tens of thousands of Americans every year. It is the third most diagnosed cancer and one of the leading causes of cancer death in the United States. The American Cancer Society estimates that 150,000 Americans will be diagnosed with colon cancer in 2009, and out of that 150,000 citizens, over 50,000 of them will die from it.

What is so shocking about these deaths is the vast majority of them could have easily been prevented with a simple routine screening called a colonoscopy. That is 50,000 moms and dads and sons and daughters that could still be enjoying the great gift of life if they would have just taken the time to get a routine colonoscopy by their 50th birthday.

Mr. Speaker, a colonoscopy takes under 1 hour to complete, and the results you receive will literally save your life. The American Cancer Society estimates that if detected early, 90 percent of all colon cancer deaths could be prevented.

Now, just, if you will, take a look at this board here. Look at the stages. Now, the stage where my mom was diagnosed is stage IV. There's about an 11 percent survivability rate and at stage I, 90 percent, and despite the effectiveness of this colonoscopy that can figure this out, only 50 percent of Americans use this procedure.

I think that's a very shocking statistic. Compare that prevention rate with breast cancer, where over 80 percent of women get a routine mammogram, and you can see why I work so hard to spread the word on preventing this disease.

But there is some outstanding news. The outstanding news is that there is hope ahead in fighting this killer. The Centers for Disease Control, along with groups like the American Cancer Society and the Colorectal Cancer Coalition, have taken it upon themselves to raise awareness about this disease.

Specifically, the American Cancer Society has launched a campaign to push the number of Americans who get screened for colon cancer from 50 percent to 75 percent by the year 2015. It's a lofty goal, but it's a goal that's worthwhile. In fact, a few of my colleagues have introduced important legislation aimed at reaching this mile marker.

One particular piece of legislation that I hope will receive strong consideration in the House Energy and Commerce Committee is my legislation, H.R. 1330, the Colon Cancer Screening and Detection Act of 2009. My legislation is pretty simple. Just like a mammogram, my bill would require every health insurance plan in America, both group and individual, to cover a preventive colonoscopy before the deductible. This legislation is very badly needed.

One of the top reasons many Americans do not get screened is the cost. The average cost of a typical colonoscopy is over $1,000. That wouldn't be a concern to many citizens who are currently covered under a private health insurance plan, but most health insurance plans have deductibles exceeding $1,000, or worse, they have a restrictive cap on preventive care, sometimes as low as $250, and that's the issue.

We have thousands of Americans who are covered by insurance plans that pay little to none of the costs associated with a colonoscopy, so they never get one. It's a shame. We live in the

greatest country on Earth, and many of our citizens choose not to get a highly successful, life-saving, preventive test because their health plan doesn't cover it.

I'm aware that the health insurance industry is totally opposed to my legislation. They will argue that my bill will dramatically increase the cost of insurance, but there is little evidence to support their claim. They said the same thing when Members of Congress pushed hard to require insurance plans to cover mammograms in an effort to increase the rate of early diagnosis of breast cancer; yet almost every single State in America requires insurance companies to cover a mammogram, not subject to the deductible.

Furthermore, it has been well-documented that once colon cancer has progressed into the latter stage, the health care costs for treatment skyrocket and the survival rate plummets.

Now, let's look at the board again that I brought up earlier. Look at this stage I through IV, and I'll make my point here. With such a high success rate if detected early, it makes financial sense but it also makes moral sense to find and treat colon cancer as early and as soon as possible.

I believe that an industry, which is one of the most profitable in America, should lend its services toward preventing illness, not hampering our citizens' ability to discover it. Requiring health insurance plans to cover a colonoscopy is a commonsense approach to fighting colon cancer.

In fact, many in Congress have voted in the past to extend Medicare beneficiaries this very benefit. In July of 2008, Congress passed the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act. That, among other things, addressed the glaring deficiency in colon cancer prevention found in the Medicare program, and the language that was inserted into that bill to address colonoscopy access is very similar to the bill that I have introduced. That Medicare legislation, which passed the House of Representatives overwhelmingly, is a great piece of legislation that I think will save thousands of lives.

And in closing, before I turn it over to one of my colleagues, I want to encourage all Americans that are 50 and over who have not had a colonoscopy screening to get one, and if you have a family history like myself, I think you need to start earlier.

With increased awareness and some policy changes here in Congress, I believe that we can save tens of thousands of lives.

You know, colon cancer is a silent killer, and Mr. Speaker, with the help of colleagues like Congresswoman KAY GRANGER and Representative PATRICK KENNEDY I know who's an advocate on this issue, it is my hope that we can make a dramatic impact on this terrible and painful disease.

And I would like to call my colleague, Representative GRANGER, up and maybe she wants to share some of her thoughts about Colon Cancer Awareness Month, and I know representing Texas and Fort Worth of course, being an alum of TCU, I'm very proud of her leadership on these health issues. We've also worked together on tribal issues. I want to thank her and would like to yield to Congresswoman KAY GRANGER.

Ms. GRANGER. Thank you to my colleague DAN BOREN. Thank you so much for your hard work on this.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on the important issue of colorectal cancer, as Congressman BOREN also did.

□ 1730

Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second most common cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every 3½ minutes, someone is diagnosed with colorectal cancer. Every 9 minutes, someone dies from colorectal cancer. This is a disease that affects both men and women.

This year, an estimated 149,000 new cases will be diagnosed, and an estimated 50,000 deaths will be caused by this cancer. The real tragedy is that many of these cancer cases and deaths occurred needlessly because the vast majority of colorectal cancer deaths can be prevented through proper screening and early detection.

That is why I introduced a resolution recognizing March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and commemorating the 10th anniversary of the first designation of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

The more we talk about this disease, the more we encourage our family, our friends, and our neighbors to get screened, and the more lives we save.

I hope my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee will discharge House Concurrent Resolution 60 from committee soon so that leadership can schedule the resolution for floor consideration.

Less than half of those who should be screened for colon cancer are screened. Bringing House Concurrent Resolution 60 to the floor next week will encourage even more discussion about this disease that is preventable when detected early.

But talking about colorectal cancer and recognizing Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month aren't enough. We need to increase Federal funding for early detection and screening. Along with my colleague from Rhode Island, PATRICK KENNEDY, I've introduced a bill that would authorize funding for early detection, screenings, and make preventive care a priority.

Specifically, the Colorectal Cancer Prevention, Early Detection, and Treatment Act, H.R. 1189, would establish a national screening program for colorectal cancer for individuals over 50 years of age or those who are at high risk. It would authorize State funding for these screenings and create a public awareness and education campaign on colorectal cancer.

Despite scientific evidence supporting the benefits of screenings, screens for these diseases in this country remain low. Every 5 seconds, someone one who should be screened for colorectal cancer is not. When it's diagnosed late, the survival rate for colorectal cancer is only 10 percent. When it's diagnosed early—before it spreads—the survival rate is 90 percent.

Early detection screening saves lives, and if everyone over 50 years of age were screened regularly for colorectal cancer, the death rate for this disease could plummet by 80 percent.

In addition to screening saving lives, early detection saves money. Treatment costs for colorectal cancer are extremely high and could be greatly reduced if mass screenings occur.

Colorectal cancer treatment costs totaled roughly $8.4 billion for new cases in 2004. The cost of two-thirds of these colorectal cancer cases are borne by the Medicare program.

The Lewin Group recently conducted a comprehensive study of the potential cost savings to Medicare and found that every 10 years a colorectal cancer screening program will result in savings of about 1½ years worth of Medicare expenses. If screenings were increased among people 50 years and older in the United States, it would save billions of dollars in Medicare expenditures. It would also save thousands of lives.

The Colorectal Cancer Prevention, Early Detection, and Screening program ensures that people who are screened will get the full continuum of cancer care, including the appropriate followup for abnormal tests, diagnostic and therapeutic services, and treatment for detective cancers.

If you have not already, I urge you to cosponsor the Colorectal Cancer Prevention, Early Detection, and Treatment Act, and join me in observing Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Observing Colorectal Awareness Month provides us with the opportunity to discuss the importance of early detection and screening. It also provides us with the opportunity to thank the thousands of volunteers and national and community organizations for their work in promoting awareness for colorectal cancer.

DAN BOREN, I thank you for your time and your work on this.

Mr. BOREN. Thank you. I think you're hearing the same thing over and over again—my colleague, KAY GRANGER, talking about early detection, talking about how important it is to go and get that test.

We lost my mother. But if you look back in our family history, my grandfather had colon cancer, my grandmother had colon cancer. They did catch it early. So if you're someone out there who's watching this afternoon and you haven't gotten it done and you're thinking maybe you should do it—even if you're not at that 50 marker, if you have someone in your family who has been diagnosed in the past—

think about going and getting that test.

You know, Mr. Speaker, Katie Couric, the anchor of the CBS Evening News is a strong advocate for colon cancer awareness. She lost her husband to this disease and since then has led a personal campaign to bring awareness to this issue.

A few years back, she told a compelling story at her old job on the Today Show about a family that lost a loved one to this disease. I think it's a compelling story that I would like to share on the House floor today.

Mr. Speaker, Michael and Erin Stennis learned the hard facts about colon cancer in the worst possibly way. This is their story.

Michael Stennis, an ex-football player, was the picture of health—43, fit, a businessman who owned a chain of successful restaurants. He and his wife Erin had been married for 14 years and had two gorgeous children.

His wife discusses her husband's persona this way, ''He had a lot of strength of character. He was amazing. He wasn't afraid of voicing his opinions. He loved his friends, and his children were his life. He was the consummate family man.''

Mr. Speaker, you can tell that Michael was an all-American guy. Yet, it's hard to believe such a vibrant man would have such a difficult fight ahead of him.

Three years earlier, when he was just 40, Michael started experiencing irregular bowel habits and rectal bleeding. Like many Americans, he thought it was nothing serious. His wife began describing what happened, and said this, ''He had blood in his stool. He went to the doctor. Unbeknownst to me, the doctor suggested that he have a colonoscopy.

''My husband, being the very macho man that he is, did not want anything invasive. He just could not imagine that type of procedure taking place. So, like thousands of other Americans, he came home and said, 'It's been taken care of.' And that was it.''

A few years later, Erin realized that something was very wrong with her husband. She said, ''It had gotten to the point where he was having such severe pain. Because he was an athlete, he sucked it up. He would say to himself, 'If I feel something, oh, you know, I can work it out.' But it got to the point where the pain became so severe that he had trouble moving.

''Finally, in November of that year,'' she said, ''I walked into our bedroom and I saw him hunched over in the closet. Something was very wrong.''

So she finally got Michael to go in for the colonoscopy. And then they got the results. It was the evening of their daughter's Thanksgiving pageant. They got a call from their family doctor and friend, Peter Waldstein.

She described the scene this way: ''My husband was on one side of the room and I was on the other side. His cell phone went off and I could see him on the phone and I could see the change in his face. It was our dear friend Peter calling to tell us both the news. We knew from that moment on that our lives had changed forever,'' she explains.

He was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer. The cancer had spread from Michael's colon and had metastasized to his liver. It was a devastating prognosis.

After a long 20-plus month fight with this horrendous disease, Michael Stennis died. He was 45 years old.

Mr. Speaker, this is a story that is told countless times across America. It is a story of a young and vibrant individual who has seen his or her life end far too early because of this horrendous disease. It's a sad case—a case that is very similar to the one that took my mom's life. It's a story similar to the one that took former White House Press Secretary Tony Snow's life. I think it's Congress's duty to do something about this.

My colleagues and I have introduced multiple pieces of legislation aimed at addressing this terrible cancer. But we need Congress to begin the process of examining it.

Every year, this disease takes thousands of lives. It is my hope that, with the support of groups like the American Cancer Society, the Colorectal Cancer Coalition, and my colleagues, we can make an impact.

I can't tell you how much I have personally lost from this—how many times I want to pick up the phone and I want to call my mom.

This is a real human face. These are real people that are dying. They don't have to be dying. All it takes is a simple test. My mom waited too long. She got the test too late.

I don't want this to happen to some other family in America. So I need your help, all those in Congress, all of my colleagues, but I also need the American people to write your Member of Congress.

I introduced this legislation in the last Congress, the 110th Congress. I got four cosponsors. People were scared about the insurance companies. But, let me tell you what. When given the choice between my mom and the insurance companies, the choice is very easy. We need to help these families. This is why I came to Congress.

□ 1745

I didn't come to Congress just because it is fun. I came to Congress to do something. This is what it is all about. Someone once said public service is about helping people. Let's help these families.

H.R. 1216, YOUTH PREVENTION AND TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, it is pronounced ''Buyer.'' My family is Alsatian; so if you go back in my ancestry, I know the gentleman is new here to the Congress, it was de Buyer. So my sense is that the gentleman will remember it for a while.

I come to the floor here to talk about a very pivotal issue that will be facing the public health of our country, and this is the issue of tobacco. Members of the House will be presented with a choice here relatively soon about which Federal regulatory structure over tobacco products we should use.

Now, it is interesting, for a long time the issue was whether we should regulate tobacco or not regulate tobacco. There is now this growing concensus that the Federal Government in some way should regulate tobacco, and now we are trying to figure out with regard to who should do that regulation. Should it be the FDA under Health and Human Services; or, as Mr. MCINTYRE and I are proposing, that it be a separate agency under Health and Human Services, we call it a harm reduction agency, that will focus on reduction of the risk associated with many different types of tobacco products.

So I believe that the critical issue to be considered is, how do we measurably and effectively reduce the disease and death associated with tobacco use while products remain legal and over 45 million Americans have not, cannot, or will not quit?

Keeping the American tobacco consumer and the public uninformed about the differences in risk between smoking cigarettes and using nonburning forms of tobacco or other nicotine products will not help our Nation to overcome the death and disease attributed to tobacco use.

Telling current tobacco smokers to ''Just Say No,'' to quit now, is not the most effective way to save lives. Creating a regulatory scheme that discourages and in fact chills the development of new, lower risk products is directly opposite of what many in the scientific and public health communities even advocate today. But those are the underlying tenets of what is referred to as the Waxman tobacco legislation called the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act.

What do experts say about Mr. WAXMAN's approach on tobacco?

Well, the prestigious health organization, the Royal College of Physicians, says, ''The current situation is perverse, unjust, and acts against the rights and best interests of smokers and the public health. Harm reduction has the potential to play a major part in preventing death and disability in millions of people who currently smoke and who either cannot or will not otherwise quit smoking. These smokers have a right to be able to obtain and choose from a range of safer nicotine products, and they have a right to accurate and unbiased information to guide that choice.''

From the American Association of Public Health Physicians, ''In the judgment of AAPHA, the current bill in its form will do more harm than good in terms of future tobacco-related illness and death. The current bill,'' referring to the Waxman bill, ''with all its seemingly promising elements, has so many restrictions on Federal regulatory authority that it will be unable to effect favorable change. This bill is based on the false premise that cigarettes can be made safer and that all tobacco products are equally harmful. This bill places barriers to truthful communications about the relative risk of less hazardous smokeless tobacco products and near insurmountable barriers to the development of new lower risk products.''

Now, these are two examples of organizations that have some growing concerns about the Waxman legislation. Now, in the face of that there is a growing consensus that significant harm reduction policies and programs, when combined with prevention and cessation, are, in my belief and that of MIKE MCINTYRE, the chief cosponsor of North Carolina, that it is the key to a significant reduction in disease and death from tobacco use.

So the Waxman legislation, despite the years of characterizations and representations by its proponents, does not incorporate in any meaningful way a comprehensive prevention, cessation, and harm reduction strategy. Actually, on the contrary; for a very long time, those of whom believe that a harm reduction strategy in fact threatens cessation and prevention programs. I look at this and say that they should all work together, that four fingers and a thumb makes a hand. And so, without the phalanges, do you really have a hand? So I believe that they all should have to work together, and that is what we are seeking to do here is having a harm reduction strategy that incorporates prevention, education, and cessation.

I am also greatly concerned that the Waxman legislation continues to ignore the evolution of opinion in the scientific and public health communities, and relies on tactics taught and thought that were effective in the early 1990s, such as it includes provisions that the Supreme Court had thrown out with regard to restrictions on First Amendment on advertising these issues. I was really concerned about it, and Mr. WAXMAN believes it is okay. I have great, great concern here.

Congressman MIKE MCINTYRE and I have introduced H.R. 1216, the Youth Prevention and Tobacco Harm Reduction Act. This legislation imposes significant regulatory oversight within the Department of Health and Human Services over tobacco products, and incorporates many of the provisions included in HENRY WAXMAN's legislation.

It includes serious policy and programs of prevention, cessation, and harm reduction, which we believe will lead to saving thousands of lives over the next decades. It will squarely address the issue of tobacco use by minors through additional resources and enforcement at the State levels.

In fact, Mr. MCINTYRE's and my legislation is even stronger in the protections for minors on two points. Number one, we say unto the States that with regard to the Master Settlement Agreement and monies that were supposed to be spent by the States on tobacco cessation and education and prevention programs, at the end of the Master Settlement before it was signed there was this last-moment agreement. Rather than dictating unto States on what percentage of the monies are to be spent on tobacco prevention and cessation programs they said, well, we will just leave it to the discretion of the States. The CDC then every year publishes a report with regard to what the percentage that States should be spending, States are not spending on those programs. So Mr. MCINTYRE and I come in, and we are dictating unto the States that they are to spend their Master Settlement Tobacco Agreement on programs to help children.

The other point that Mr. MCINTYRE of North Carolina and I have is on protecting children. We are also saying to the States that we want you to treat tobacco like alcohol. So where it is illegal for a minor to possess alcohol, we also say: States, you should make it illegal for minors to possess tobacco.

With that, let me yield to a major cosponsor of this legislation. This is bipartisan legislation. It is an alternative to Mr. WAXMAN. And, actually, what Mr. MCINTYRE and I were really hopeful is that our bill here would have been adopted in the Energy and Commerce Committee as a substitute. If we could have combined our effort with that of Mr. WAXMAN's, we would have 435 votes here on the floor, and we could make this a reality and make our society a healthier and safer place.

I want to thank the gentleman for his efforts. He is a strong advocate of our agricultural policies and is very concerned with regard to ensuring that the Federal regulatory oversight from Health and Human Services does not interrupt with growing practices by our farmers.

Mr. MCINTYRE. I would like to thank Mr. BUYER, who is the principal sponsor of this responsible tobacco regulation legislation. I was pleased to be the original cosponsor with him.

In our legislation, we certainly want to make sure that this is an issue of fundamental fairness. This is not an anti-public health alternative. In fact, as Mr. BUYER was just saying and as we were just discussing in our interchange a few moments ago, in fact we have even stronger regulation to prevent youth smoking.

I have a son. When he was in high school, and he was now in law school, but who actually served on the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. So we understand that, and this is a strong statement, even stronger than Mr. WAXMAN's proposal against youth smoking. But it also recognizes that the FDA is understaffed and underfunded and overworked right now, and we are not in a situation where we need the FDA to come out on the farm and start regulating farmers. And, from that perspective, I wanted to principally speak in the next few moments as chairman of the Subcommittee on Rural Development, Biotechnology, Specialty Crops and Foreign Agriculture. The specialty crops over which our subcommittee has jurisdiction include tobacco.

Now, we may soon see H.R. 1256, which is Representative WAXMAN's bill to implement FDA regulation of tobacco products and leaf scheduled for consideration under suspensions of the rules on the House floor. This process will allow for no amendments or alternatives to be presented on this incredibly important and complex issue of tobacco regulation.

I urge my fellow Members to vote against the Waxman bill when it comes up on suspension so that we may consider an alternative bill, so that we may be able to consider the bill that Mr. BUYER and I are discussing tonight that does even more than Mr. WAXMAN's bill while preserving a vital economic engine for many communities throughout the United States, including my district in Southeastern North Carolina.

H.R. 1261 is the Youth Prevention and Tobacco Harm Reduction Act that we have introduced together, and is actually a better approach to regulating tobacco and preventing minors from using tobacco products than the Waxman bill.

The Waxman bill will grant the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, wide authority to dictate to manufacturers and growers dramatic changes in product design and leaf cultivation.

The tobacco industry contributes over $36 billion each year to the U.S. economy, employing over 19,000 individuals nationwide. This is not exactly the time to cause even thousands more of our fellow citizens to lose their jobs or to yet cause another problem with our Nation's economy. In my home State of North Carolina, over 8,600 people are employed by the industry, with a Statewide economic impact of nearly $24 billion. Mr. WAXMAN's manufacturing and FDA on the farm provisions will put many companies and growers out of business, and we absolutely cannot afford to lose any more jobs.

Our bill, H.R. 1261, specifically protects growers by preventing any government agency from requiring changes to traditional farming practices, including standard cultivation practices, curing processes, seed composition, tobacco type, fertilization, soil, recordkeeping, and any other requirements that affect farming practices. The last thing that our farmers want to see is another government bureaucrat coming out on the farm walking around, snooping around about the soil and how he is growing his crops.

In addition, our bill does more to protect public health and prevent minors from smoking even than the Waxman bill does. H.R. 1261 considers cutting-edge scientific research by promoting a harm reduction strategy to move smokers to less harmful tobacco products.

According to applied economics, the use of these reduced harm tobacco products increases the average probability of smoke cessation by over 10 percent; and I am sure my colleague will be speaking more to that aspect of this bill.

□ 1800

H.R. 1261 specifically addresses youth tobacco by encouraging States to penalize minors for purchasing and possessing tobacco products. Under current law, retailers are prohibited from selling products to minors. But unlike with the purchase of alcohol, minors are not penalized for underage purchase and possession of tobacco products. And our bill clears that up and also allows for penalties in that regard.

The bill also calls upon States to increase their percentage of the Master Settlement Agreement dollars to fund tobacco cessation and public health programs. In the past 10 years, States have spent just 3.2 percent of their total tobacco-generated revenue on tobacco prevention and cessation programs. Our bill would allow that to be increased.

H.R. 1261 is a commonsense approach to tobacco regulation that will both protect the public health and protect the jobs in our vital sector of the tobacco economy. I urge my colleagues to vote note ''no'' on Waxman and give yourself a chance to consider a more viable and reasonable economic alternative that does even more to protect our youth.

In closing to my colleague, I will say for our colleagues who may be in their offices or their staff that may still be in their offices this evening, we do have a chart that compares both bills. If we want to talk about, all right, what are the reasonable alternatives, one by one we go through the different segments of the bill to explain so that a real comparative analysis can be done. And that is what this is about. It is fundamental fairness in how we pass legislation so it is not just rushed through under suspension but we get a chance to actually analyze and compare these two bills, and that we do it in a way that will best achieve the goal here of protecting the public health, particularly of our young people, and protect jobs and not cost our economy any more jobs than our country, unfortunately, has already lost.

And with that, I yield back to my colleague. And thank you for your great work on this bill.

Mr. BUYER. I thank the gentleman for his help and his support on the bill. This is an issue about the public health of our country and the fact that we have a bipartisan approach here, a bill that we seek to decrease the mortality and morbidity rates is extremely important. There are over 100 nations around the world that are struggling with this issue. Tobacco is a legal product. It is the smoking that really hurts and harms and kills people. It is not the nicotine. And so what we are trying to do is to migrate people from smoking products to smokeless products. The very large risk differential, it is the difference between combustion and noncombustion products.

The gentleman understands that. And he is embracing the harm reduction strategy from a public health perspective. And he also wants to make sure that we work in concert with our growers, that we have very sound export policies with regard to our trading partners around the world so we don't have any World Trade Organization violations, while at the same time we are cognizant of illicit trade issues. The gentleman is an expert in these areas. And I welcome his support. And I thank him for being here tonight.

What I would like to do is I'm going to share a chart that the world has never seen. And I am hopeful that here in the United States we can continue to lead the world and to make the world a healthier place. And so what I'm going to do here is I want to talk about our harm reduction strategy and to talk about the risk differential among a continuum of risks. So the best way for me to do this is to put a chart up so all the Members can have a look at this. And I will talk about it here for a second.

I have continuum of risk here at the top, along then with the relative risk of chronic disease here on the side. And what I have done is what is not on the chart, I don't put cigars or pipe tobacco in here. That is outside of the regulation of not only our bill but also of Mr. WAXMAN's bill. But pipe and cigar is the most toxic. If I were to go on this chart, what I put on this chart listing 100 percent as the most toxic, under that which of tobacco products are to be regulated by our bill would be your nonfiltered cigarettes, so that would be your roll-your-own cigarettes or a Lucky Strike or other forms of generic cigarettes that are nonfiltered.

So I think common sense is going to tell you if there is not a filter on it, you're going to smoke it, you're going to inhale a lot of toxic substances and carcinogens deep into your lungs.

The next, as we look at continuum of risk, among available products that are on the marketplace here in the United States in North America, so you have your nonfiltered cigarettes. Next are your filtered cigarettes. That kind of makes sense. If I'm going to put a filter on it, I'm going to reduce the risk between those two types of instruments that deliver nicotine. So that is what the key here is. People want access to their nicotine. And it is the smoking that harms them. And so how do you reduce the harm? And so what drives some people a little crazy here is that can you really say that there is a safer type of cigarette? Well, if you want to take a science-based approach, you really have to be very honest about this and say, well, among the types of cigarettes, there are different types of cigarettes as a delivery device of nicotine that are safer than others. But they are all not entirely safe. But there is a risk differential. And it should be discussed. So we have from nonfiltered to filtered cigarettes.

What I don't have here, which sort of comes up next, is you actually have vented filtered cigarettes. But what we are finding out from the science-based approach is that if you put vents into the filters, even though you're trying to reduce the smoke and a lot of the bad, toxic substances, people will draw on that cigarette a little harder, and so they are sucking it deeper in their lungs. And that is not a good thing.

Next we have our tobacco-heated cigarettes and electronic cigarettes. The reason I put question marks with regard to both of these types of nicotine delivery devices is that with regard to tobacco-heated cigarettes there are a couple of products that are out on the market. Philip Morris has the Accord and Reynolds American has the Eclipse. So these are out on the marketplace. We do know that these types of nicotine delivery systems are a much less riskier product than say your strictly just filtered cigarette or your nonfiltered cigarette. But where do they fall on the chart? There isn't enough science to tell us exactly where. We know it is better. It is not completely safe, but it is better. And we don't know exactly where, but we know it is falling downward on the continuum of risk chart. So we really do need some science here to tell us where the electronic cigarette and tobacco-heated cigarettes fall on that.

So that is part of the reason we want to create, under Health and Human Services, a separate agency that will focus our Nation's expertise on tobacco. And I want to be able to do that without people believing that, well, if FDA is regulating tobacco, that somehow that it is an okay product. No. This is a high-risk product. And what is important is that somehow we get to the American people they get informed, they can make an informed choice among an array of products along the continuum of risk.

So after electronic cigarettes, if we can truly move an individual out of smoking, if they are looking on how I can gain my access to nicotine, I think people know that, hey, the surgeon general is right. There is some risk that will accord anything that has to do with smoke. If you can transition, or migrate, a population from smoking to a smokeless product, I assure you, we can take out up to around 80 percent, based on the science, almost 80 to 90 percent of the health risk can be taken away.

Now the American public needs to know that. So you say, okay, what's

the difference between a U.S. smokeless product and Swedish Snus? Well, the difference is the U.S. smokeless product is fermented, and the Swedish Snus is pasteurized. So if you can actually move to the Swedish Snus, you can eliminate about 98 percent. Think about this. Ninety-eight percent of the health risks can be taken away, yet people can still gain access to nicotine.

Now, if you wanted to go on a little bit further, there are dissolvables of tobacco that have no nitrosamines. That is the really bad stuff, and you can remove that and you can still gain access to your nicotine. And these dissolvable products that are just being introduced and tested in the marketplace are these Orbs or a tobacco stick or a strip that you can lay on your tongue and you can gain access to the nicotine.

Now, I assure you, you don't gain as quickly the access to the nicotine and get the sensation upon the brain as you would smoking the cigarette. But you can gain access to the nicotine, and people then can make an informed choice, gosh, I can gain access to my nicotine, I don't get it as quickly, I can get it, but, gee, maybe it is worth it for me to live a few more years and enjoy my family. I can enjoy my nicotine and, gee, I'm not going to die from smoking. You see, that is extremely important. And as we move people and then migrate them down from this continuum, you can move then to therapeutic, there are therapeutic methods to gain access to nicotine, through the gum, the patch, the lozenges, and then for the individuals who seek to quit.

And that is part of the process of what we are doing here is we want to incorporate a harm-reduction strategy to inform a population that if you want to gain access to your nicotine, it is the smoke that is really going to kill you. So if you can get them off of smoking and move them to smokeless products and then move them from there to therapeutic and then pharmaceutical to eventually cessation and quitting.

Now, that is part of the harm reduction strategy. And what I believe is extremely important is when we have this as a strategy, you have about 40 million smokers over here on this end of the chart, and you only have about 2 million down here that are actually trying to quit. In the meantime, of the filtered cigarettes, about 80 to 85 percent of the individuals who are smoking the cigarettes are smoking lights or ultralights. Now why are they buying lights or ultralights? Because somehow they believe that if they smoke a light or ultralight that it will be less harmful for them. You see, people are trying to make an informed decision, and they think it will be less harmful for them. The reality is these are products that are going to be harmful to you. I think people need to know and understand that.

So what we are hopeful here is that in our legislation, we create this Harm Reduction Center under Health and Human Services where we take our great minds and we do science. We do science on the entire array of products along a continuum of risk, and we inform the public so that the public, when they buy these products, that we can actually migrate our population from combustion to noncombustion products and hopefully quitting, while at the same time, we want to make our investments in education and prevention programs, not just for children and minors, but also for adults.

What is important here, what we are finding, is that when people migrate from smoking to smokeless, some fear that, wow, if somebody starts here, the smokeless product, will they actually migrate this direction on the chart, headed up the chart? The reality is it is not what is happening in the marketplace. So that is why we have created an alternative public health position for tobacco.

My good friend, Mr. WAXMAN, I applaud his perseverance over the years and his persistence. His legislation has sort of an abstinence-only approach on tobacco. I respect Mr. WAXMAN. We have had a good working relationship over the years. And I really was hopeful that he would incorporate this harm reduction in his bill. Now, he said, ''STEVE, I have got harm reduction in my bill.'' I said, ''well, HENRY, you may have it in the bill.'' But what he has are unrealistic standards that products that may gain access to the marketplace. He has a two-tiered, a two-pronged tiered test, one that will test at the individual and one at the public with regard to the impact of a particular product. It will almost be impossible for new products to gain access to the market.

If we truly wanted to make our society healthier, what we should be doing is encouraging people to move from combustion to noncombustion products. And we can do that, if I can take out 80 percent of the health risk, we are making our country healthier and hopefully then move to cessation.

That is why I call this the continuum of risk chart. And it is open and free to the world to use this chart, to scrutinize the chart. And I'm hopeful that other legislative bodies around the world will incorporate harm reduction as a strategy for a nation for them to be healthier.

The harm reduction policies advocated in H.R. 1261 are an important method to figure out how we can satisfy the nicotine cravings among all of these legal type products.

What I would like to share are what some of the scientists actually say about tobacco harm reduction as a public health strategy. From the American Association of Public Health Physicians, dated 2008, ''tobacco harm reduction is taken to mean encouraging and enabling smokers to reduce their risk of tobacco-related illness and death by switching to less hazardous smokeless tobacco products.''

□ 1815

You see, the reason I don't have advertising restrictions in my bill is I think it is extremely important. Mr. MCINTYRE and I created this bipartisan piece of legislation for a purpose. We want to make sure that people are informed with regard to their entire array of products, tobacco products. And you need to be able to inform them as to what products have the higher risk, which ones have less risk.

And what really concerns me is, if you make, let the FDA do this, of which the FDA it is counter to their culture, even, to somehow say that one cigarette, this is a safer cigarette among an array of cigarettes that are harmful. That is a very, very challenging endeavor for them. And so it is why some in the public health community are a little concerned.

The International Journal for Drug Policy, their quote, ''Numerous alternative systems for nicotine delivery exist, many of them far safer than smoking. A pragmatic public health approach to tobacco control would recognize a continuum of risk and encourage nicotine users to move themselves down the risk spectrum by choosing safer alternatives to smoking without demanding abstinence.'' That is the International Journal of Drug Policy, and that is exactly what we are trying to do here.

There is another quote from the American Association of Public Health Physicians, ''In practical terms, enhancement of current policies, based on the premise that all tobacco products are equally risky, will yield only small or barely measurable reductions in tobacco-related illnesses and death. Addition of a harm reduction component, however, could yield a 50 to 80 percent reduction in tobacco-related illness and death over the first 10 years, and likely a reduction of up to 90 percent within 20 years.''

Now you see why Mr. MCINTYRE and I are so excited about this alternative approach, because abstinence only does not achieve the goals to make a society healthier with regard to tobacco. And this is exactly what we are trying to achieve, that is also being endorsed here by the American Association of Public Health Physicians.

The Royal College of Physicians in 2007 stated, ''Harm reduction is a fundamental component of many aspects of the medicine and, indeed, everyday, life, yet for some reason, effective harm reduction principles have not been applied to tobacco smoking. It is very clear that for most of the major health effects of tobacco, smoking is many times more dangerous than smokeless tobacco use.''

The American Council on Science and Health stated, ''The American Council on Science and Health believes that strong support of tobacco harm reduction is fully consistent with its mission to promote sound science in regulation and in public policy, and to assist consumers in distinguishing real

health threats from spurious health claims. As this report documents, there is a strong scientific and medical foundation for tobacco harm reduction, which shows a great potential as a public health strategy to help millions of smokers.''

With regard to—here is another one from SmokeFree Pennsylvania. ''Although smokeless tobacco is just as addictive as cigarettes and should not be used by those who are not addicted to nicotine, cigarettes are about 100 times deadlier than smokeless tobacco products.''

Here is a quote from Britton and Edwards, The Lancet, in 2007. ''The risk of adverse effects associated with snus,'' now snus is pasteurized product, Swedish snus, ''is lower than that associated with smoking, overall by an estimated 90 percent. Whatever the true overall hazard, use of low nitrosamine smokeless products is clearly substantially less harmful than tobacco smoking.''

Why am I pulling out these quotes? I am pulling out these quotes because what has been talked about as those who support the Waxman legislation is that somehow all of these products are equally harmful. That is false. That is what I want to convey to everyone. They are not equally harmful. And it is extremely important that the public be informed about all that these types of products, along a continuum of risk, so people can make informed choices. We do that every day. We make decisions on what kind of automobile we want to drive. We do the continuum of risk. How about what we eat, what we drink? We make choices and decisions every day. Should I put on my seatbelt, should I wear a helmet. All kind of things. We make judgments.

When I look at the farmers, my gosh, there are all types of risk out on the farm, and a lot of judgments are made along a continuum of risk along with the farm machinery.

We make these judgments. Why don't we do that as a public health strategy for tobacco? It only makes sense. And what I am really hopeful here—I had a really good discussion last week with Mr. WAXMAN about some tweaks on amendments, some of which he didn't agree to of which I was hopeful.

I really appeal to my good friend from California because we could combine, and I shared this with him. We could combine our efforts here. If he would endorse this harm reduction strategy with his bill, we could get this to the President's desk. I really believe that this could pass in a very large number.

I remember years ago when Joe Kennedy and I combined our efforts together, and when we would come to the floor it would pass 435 to nothing. And I was really hopeful, I had an earnest effort here, good discussions with Mr. WAXMAN, and I told him I would take a good hard look at his bill and I would recommend some changes, and I was really hopeful that he would combine a harm reduction strategy with his abstinence only approach, and we would truly have the four fingers, a thumb that will make a hand. But without this, he is only going to have, I don't know what you call it, a thumb and a palm. I guess he is only going to have a palm. And that is really not going to be good. So I want to build a hand and not just a palm to help our country.

The other point I have is, Madam Speaker, I would submit for the RECORD a letter from the American Council on Science and Health from Dr. Elizabeth Whelan dated March 12, 2009, and, dated October 18, 2008, the AAPHP Tobacco Harm Reduction Resolution, titled Resolution on Tobacco Harm Reduction.

AMERICAN COUNCIL
ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH,
New York, NY, March 12, 2009.

Hon. STEVE BUYER,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE MCINTYRE,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BUYER AND REPRESENTATIVE MCINTYRE: On behalf of the more than 400 scientists who advise our organization, and the hundreds of thousands of consumers we represent, thank you for your work on H.R. 1261. Our scientists understand the urgent need to reduce the dreadful toll of cigarettes on the American people—with over 400,000 smoking-related deaths each and every year in our country. Your bill is a tougher, science-based alternative to Rep. Waxman's HR 1256.

H.R. 1256 will not only fail to reduce the ravages of cigarette-induced disease and death—it will likely worsen it. The new regulation of tobacco ''additives'' will not lower the toxic and carcinogenic mixture induced by the combustion and inhalation of cigarette smoke. The enhanced restrictions on lower-risk tobacco products, such as smokeless tobacco and ''clean'' nicotine—which have been shown to assist addicted smokers in quitting—will condemn the over 40 million addicted smokers to the same old ''quit or die'' pair of options.

Successful quit rates are under 20% utilizing the currently-approved remedies. The Waxman legislation would codify this failed policy into law.

Perhaps the worst aspect of this Waxman approach is that it gives FDA responsibility for overseeing tobacco issues. This will allow the cigarette makers to cloak themselves in the mantle of being ''FDA Approved,'' shielding them from liability for their irresponsible marketing schemes and manipulation of cigarettes' addiction capabilities.

Your bill—H.R. 1261—will obviate most of the detrimental and counterproductive effects of the Waxman bill. Truthfully telling the American consumer about lower-risk tobacco products—harm reduction rather than ''quit or die''—along with stringent marketing restrictions and attention-getting warning labels, and the establishment of a tobacco-regulation section in the Department of Health and Human Services—not the FDA—will all be of major benefit in reducing the toll of cigarettes in America.

Sincerely,

DR. ELIZABETH M. WHELAN,
President.

RESOLUTION ON TOBACCO HARM REDUCTION

Whereas there is substantial scientific evidence that selected smokeless tobacco (ST) products can satisfy the nicotine addiction of inveterate smokers while eliminating most, if not all, risk of pulmonary and cardiovascular complications of smoking and while reducing the risk of cancer by more than 95% and

Whereas transitioning smokers to selected ST products will eliminate environmental tobacco smoke and fire-related hazards and

Whereas current ''abstain, quit, or die'' tobacco control policies in the United States may have reached their maximum possible public health benefit because of the large number of cigarette smokers either unwilling or unable to discontinue their addiction to nicotine, and

Whereas there is evidence that harm reduction works and can be accomplished in a way that will not increase initiation or impede smoking cessation and

Whereas health-related agencies and organizations, both within the United States and Abroad have already gone on record endorsing Harm Reduction as an approach to further reducing tobacco related illness and death, and

Whereas current federal policy requires tobacco product labeling that leaves the incorrect impression that all tobacco product present equal risk; and

Whereas certain tax policies put ST products at a competitive disadvantage, compared to cigarettes; and

Whereas harm reduction approaches to reducing tobacco related illness and death promise to be more politically and financially viable than alternative approaches because harm reduction approaches can secure the support of many tobacco-industry-related stakeholders.

Be it Therefore Resolved that the American Association of Public Health Physicians go on record as favoring Harm Reduction as a central component of public health efforts to reduce tobacco-related illness and death and

Be it further Resolved that such efforts shall encourage the following approaches:

1. Product labeling to inform consumers of the relative risk profiles of the various classes of tobacco products.

2. Governmental and health-organization sponsored health education to educate consumers to the risk profiles of the various classes of tobacco products

3. Revision of taxation schemes at federal, state, and local levels to reflect risk profiles and costs to society of the various classes of tobacco products

4. Regulation of the manufacturing and marketing of the various classes of tobacco products reflective of their respective risk profiles and costs to society

Be it further Resolved that funds be established through taxation of tobacco products to facilitate government-sponsored (as opposed to tobacco company sponsored) research and program evaluation to refine our understanding of the relative risk profiles of the various classes of tobacco products, market trends, and the impact of governmental policy and programming on tobacco product consumption.

The last point I would like to make is the appeal that my good friend, MIKE MCINTYRE, made to the Members. And the appeal is that we have a choice before us. The choice before us is to take an abstinence only approach to tobacco, or do we really combine forces and use a harm reduction strategy, coupled with cessation prevention education efforts. It should all be together.

And I asked the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, if he would protect the right that this substitute be heard here on the floor, just as he permitted this substitute to be

made in the Energy and Commerce Committee. He said that his intent was to bring his tobacco bill to the floor under suspension. I appealed to my good friend not to do that. Allow Congress to work its will, just as you did at the committee.

When this bill came before the committee, it was all Republicans voted for it and all Democrats voted against it. I was surprised by that. I was surprised by that because we, Mr. MCINTYRE and I, looked at this from a bipartisan perspective, and we were seeking to improve public health. And when you try to work to improve public health from this perspective this isn't one of these fights about socializing medicine or something that defines political parties. This one really surprised me that within the committee, that there was a partisan vote. That should have never, ever have happened at the committee.

And what I am hopeful here is that Mr. WAXMAN, when he makes his appeal to the Speaker for his legislation to come to the floor, that he actually goes through regular order, that he goes to the Rules Committee, and that Mr. MCINTYRE and I be permitted to have our bipartisan substitute be debated here on the House floor.

And please, do not bring—this is too important of a public health position to come up on suspension. This is a bipartisan bill. And to bring it up on suspension denies the rights of a lot of Members for this public, harm reduction strategy in which we seek to improve public health.

So, if, in fact, if Mr. WAXMAN brings his tobacco bill to the floor, my appeal would be to all Members to vote against the suspension. Now, the purpose of voting against the suspension isn't necessarily on the substance of the bill itself. It is about the process. We have got the process and procedure and you have substance. To bring a bill this important on public health under suspension and denying the right of a substitute, now we have a process issue. And Mr. MCINTYRE and I will be appealing to Members to vote ''no'' on suspension. We shouldn't be suspending the rules and denying amendments and the substitute here on this floor. The Congress should work the will of the American people, and that is, that all views and opinions and amendments and substitutes should be made in order here. And what this has really been done now it is narrowed down to two positions.

And since Mr. WAXMAN will not incorporate this, the least we can do is have this issue heard here on the floor. And that is my appeal.

So let me conclude with this. Mr. WAXMAN, I appeal to my good friend, allow this to come to the floor. Do not put your bill on suspension. If your bill comes to the floor on suspension, then Mr. MCINTYRE and I are asking for all Members to vote against the suspension and for the clear purpose that our right to be heard.

I will yield back.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRAVEL IN OUR COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FUDGE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 60 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. BERKLEY. 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 Special Order of business travel.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. BERKLEY. A few weeks ago, Madam Speaker, I came to the floor of the House and gave a very spirited defense of my congressional district which encompasses my hometown of Las Vegas. I did that because my community was under horrific attack by Members of this body, and it did us tremendous financial damage.

I wanted to speak more than 5 minutes to talk about the importance of travel in this country, the importance to our economy, and why we should be encouraging people to travel, and why we should be encouraging businesses to continue to conduct their meetings in destination areas like Las Vegas, but there are so many others. And I would like to talk to you a little bit about my community. But before I do that, I think I would like to yield to my very good friend, RON KLEIN from the great State of Florida, who also depends on tourism as its lifeblood in its economy.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Nevada for calling us together tonight because I think, as we realize, all over the United States, tourism, the flow of people, the flow of goods that go with the people, the fact that people come from all over the world to our great, wonderful attractions, whether they be in Las Vegas, or whether they be in Florida, where I am from. I am from the southeast coast of Florida, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, all over Florida and I know that all over the United States there are some just unbelievable places to go. And the good news is there are actually some good buys right now.

But besides that, the more important part though is that tourism is a very, very important part of our economy. It is important on so many levels. Economically, let's just start with the jobs. I know that you feel so strongly about, Congresswoman BERKLEY, the jobs that are created in the hospitality industry, the construction jobs that go along with it, all the ancillary services and support and the food and the, all the entertainment and equipment and things like that. They are very much a part of our economy all over the United States.

Certainly it is not just where the people actually travel to. It is the fact that the things that supply the equipment, the buildings, all the support services come from 50 States. Every State is impacted by a strong tourism trade. And it is just very exciting to be part and to live in a community where we have tourism as such an active part.

Being from South Florida, we not only draw people from all over the United States to Florida, but we get people from all over the world, as you do as well. And I know just from the Latin American community, the European community, Asian community, they come to our beaches, they come to our attractions, our wonderful hotels, the great quality of life, the diversity of our culture, the diversity of the people in Florida, incredible restaurants to choose from. But, you know, obviously, in struggling times we know it affects everybody. It affects the discretionary dollar.

But I think one thing we do want to encourage, and certainly with the economic stimulus package that has now been presented, we are now beginning to work through some of these difficult issues with the banks and the credit which have a lot to do with supporting our economy throughout the United States. This is going to take a little bit of time.

□ 1830

But I think everyone should have that confidence level to know that, as Americans, we are going to get through this. The goal is to contract what is going on right now.

The reality is, at the same time, people still need to get out; they still need to do business, and certainly, as we know, even as unemployment has moved up a little bit, we still have over 90 percent of Americans who are gainfully employed. There are wonderful opportunities to travel to our great places all over the United States, to spend a few dollars, to stay in a wonderful place, to have family time, business time, to eat a good meal, and it is just all very exciting because we do have this great infrastructure and this great entertainment system in place, but it is the lifeblood, in many ways, of our country's economy.

I just want to thank you for not only being a leader in understanding tourism, but also, in the recovery and reinvestment bill that we did, there is so much in there which is going to help support getting our economy moving again and in building that confidence to know that people should travel and should enjoy the tourism industry—our hotels, our properties and just get a great benefit out of it. So I would like to thank you for calling us together. I am glad to support this great initiative that you have put out there.

Ms. BERKLEY. Well, I really appreciate your being here. I knew, as the Representative from south Florida, that your economy has probably been hit the same way that Las Vegas has. Could I ask you a question?

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Absolutely.

Ms. BERKLEY. What we have found is that we know leisure travel is down because of the recession and that it's a little bit more challenging for families to go on vacation now, and I can understand that, but where Las Vegas has been particularly hit is in the business travel. Since the first of the year, we have lost 341 conventions. The impact on Las Vegas has been devastating. I'm wondering if you're seeing an impact on business travel as well.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. If the gentlelady would yield, I would be more than happy to respond. Thank you for yielding to me.

The answer is, yes, there has been an impact. We have a lot of hotels that do a lot of business travel. We have convention centers in Miami, in Fort Lauderdale and in West Palm Beach, of course, and in the rest of Florida, also in Orlando, which is a huge destination.

Ms. BERKLEY. Yes, they're the second best in the United States.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I don't know if it's the second best. It may be the best. Maybe we have the second largest number of hotel rooms, but again, great choices all the way around.

Yes, Florida has been hit hard. A lot of people travel to Florida and plan business conventions 1 year, 2 years or 3 years in advance. There have been some cancellations.

Ms. BERKLEY. What does that do to the job market in south Florida?

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. What it does, of course, anywhere is if, in fact, a hotel has a certain less number of room nights—of which we know ''room nights'' are the number of rooms times the number of nights for a particular convention—and if a convention has 100 rooms and there are 5 nights, which is 500 room nights, that's a big impact. It's not just the hotel. It's the food that goes with it. It's all of the hospitality.

Ms. BERKLEY. Taxicab drivers.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Absolutely.

Ms. BERKLEY. Dry cleaning.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. That's right, and there is some great shopping in local communities, of course, that goes with it.

Ms. BERKLEY. I love shopping.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. You know, it has had an impact. Again, I think that our businesses are doing what a lot of businesses are doing right now. They're clamping down. They're making sure that their systems are running as efficiently as possible, but they are great optimists, and the properties are just wonderful. We have a new one—I won't give a particular plug—but it's down in Miami. It's the Fontainebleau——

Ms. BERKLEY. Oh, yes.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Which is a world famous hotel.

Ms. BERKLEY. And they're also building in Las Vegas.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. That's right. They are. They're the same owners. They just put $1 billion into a property down there, but it's not just that hotel. There are so many wonderful hotels. We have large hotels, boutique hotels. Again, people love to come to the beaches and relax.

Ms. BERKLEY. And you can get a good deal right now.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. And you can get a very good deal, so keep that in mind if you're looking to travel.

But it is true. This economic downturn has made a lot more rooms available, and that does have a broad impact, which is why I am so supportive of these initiatives that we are taking right now to rebuild confidence in the economy.

The President's Reinvestment and Recovery Act is very much a part of recognizing, yes, we have to fix the banks and that, yes, we have to fix the mortgages. We are beginning to really move in some positive directions there. Yes, we had to do a stimulus plan, and the stimulus plan may not be perfect, but it is designed to be monitored very carefully so that, as we look every 30 days, we ask: Is it creating jobs? As for all of these outcome measurements that we're expecting, the key to all of this is that, if it's not working in creating jobs, it gets cancelled, and we move on to something else, but it's all about, in our local communities, doing things that will get the economy up and running, making people feel better about themselves so they can buy and sell businesses and houses.

Mr. FARR. If the gentleman will yield——

Ms. BERKLEY. We have been joined by Congressman SAM FARR from California, who happens to chair the tourism caucus in Congress. Welcome, and thanks for being part of this.

Mr. FARR. Thank you very much for inviting me. I enjoy being part of this tag team that is really trying to give a different message than has been given.

I think the press has really done a disservice in sort of criticizing business travel, because everybody knows we're in tough times, and so they feel like, well, people shouldn't be out recreating with a corporate budget. On the other hand, when you stop and cancel those conventions that have been in your city, in the backlash, we've lost 20 percent of the hotel market. Twenty percent of the hotel market has reported that, just in that 20 percent, cancellations have exceeded $220 million for January and February. Now, when you have a domestic travel industry that employs 7.5 million people, when that industry falls off——

Ms. BERKLEY. Did you say 7.5 million people?

Mr. FARR. Just in the domestic travel. Just domestic travel.

Ms. BERKLEY. Interesting.

Mr. FARR. If you break it down to business travel that we're talking about tonight, it's 2.4 million American jobs. That's $240 billion in spending and $39 billion in tax revenue, which is the TOT—the Transit Occupancy Tax—and sales tax that those folks in their business travel spend at places like we all represent. I don't represent a big convention area. I represent the very small Monterey peninsula, but our little county does $2 billion in travel and tourism, second only to agriculture. It is very important.

Ms. BERKLEY. My husband and I went to a Reno physicians' association meeting in Monterey, and it was an absolutely delightful place to have a convention.

Mr. FARR. Those associations, the small ones like your husband is involved in, have been canceling. So what has also affected the big conventions in your communities that can handle some of the largest conventions in the world trickle down to the smaller communities that handle the smaller ones. This impact, this negative message that got out about domestic travel, is just contrary to what you have just talked about.

This stimulus package was about stimulating jobs, not about losing jobs. It was about keeping and creating more jobs. If there is any industry that can pick up a lot of labor quickly when things are going good, it's the travel and tourism. It's the restaurant workers. It's adding additional workers—dishwashers and people who wait on tables, to pick up the hotel services, to pick up the delivery services, the flowers, all of this. Somehow this is kind of looked at as, well, if you can have that kind of luxury, then you must not be sympathetic to the losses that are going on. We see those losses because those people are unemployed.

Ms. BERKLEY. Exactly. Well, I think, if I'm hearing you correctly, you're saying that business travel is very much a part of the economy of the United States of America, and without it, we are going to have thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of people unemployed. Those are our fellow citizens.

Mr. FARR. Travel and tourism is the largest business in the world, and it is expanding faster than any other business. Every country is trying to do more of it. You see the advertising on our television sets about islands in the Caribbean, about going to Spain or about going to Australia and New Zealand, all of those travel promotion ads. We don't do that. The United States, unfortunately, isn't running any ads in other countries, saying, ''Visit the United States.''

I and the other co-Chair, ROY BLUNT, of the Travel and Tourism Caucus have a bill. It is a bill to essentially provide grants to States and local communities to do that kind of destination marketing. We know that a lot of Canadians——

Ms. BERKLEY. Put me on.

Mr. FARR. What I just wanted to mention for both of you—because I am very, very sympathetic to the problems of Las Vegas. Las Vegas is the biggest convention city in the United States, and because of the bad press, all of these businesses have canceled. You've pointed out what is happening to the

unemployment. It has also had huge foreclosures in Las Vegas. It is a town that is probably, as a city, more affected by this economic downturn than any other city.

Ms. BERKLEY. And I'm sure Florida is right behind us.

Mr. FARR. I was home last weekend. It was interesting that people were telling me, if you want to travel now and go by air anywhere in the United States—say I want to go from the West Coast to the East Coast—they said book your travel through Las Vegas. The prices for air travel going through Las Vegas are the cheapest in the United States.

Ms. BERKLEY. Yes. Yes. We're practically giving away rooms in order to attract people to our community. I don't think the three of us, any of us, are suggesting that companies should be using taxpayers' dollars in order to fund business travel.

Mr. FARR. No, absolutely not.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. No. I would just support what you're saying.

First of all, I think your idea of branding of the United States as a place for travel and tourism is a wonderful idea. You see the Philippines. You see, you know, countries do this. In Florida, we have something called Visit Florida, which is a public-private partnership, set up a number of years ago, which brands Florida and promotes it in different places.

I support the idea of branding the United States as a place and then, obviously, letting local communities co-op together, putting leverage those dollars and doing it. I think you're all right.

One other point: We're talking about big. Let's also talk small. In your community, I'll bet there are lots of small businesses—bed and breakfasts and lots of other things—that are just wonderful places. These are people who are very dependent and who are also in cooperation with our large properties.

Mr. FARR. What is very interesting about this is that travel is really educational. I mean this city, I think, is a must for any child in school who is learning about American history. In making it interesting, it comes alive. I mean the city of Washington may be the best family tourism city in the world because most of the things here are free—going to the museums, visiting all the monuments—and you can't help but recognize the Capitol when you see it. You've seen it in books. You've seen the Washington Monument and the Lincoln monument. This city makes it exciting. So you think about how many different ways one gets educated by visiting someplace else, knowing more about themselves.

I was a Peace Corps volunteer, and I was living in another culture and was experiencing all that newness in food, in dance, in music, in language that made me realize the strengths of my culture in America but also some of the weaknesses—the family values issues where people really stick together in families. I find that travel and tourism is an eye opener, and I represent Carmel where I live, which is a small, little town of 4,000 people. Everybody has heard of Carmel. It's just a charming, little town.

The mayor of Carmel, not Clint Eastwood but one of the other mayors, was telling me that, and asked me the question: What do you think is the number 1 question asked for things that people want from the city government? I always say: Well, where is Clint Eastwood's restaurant? He said: No, that wasn't the question. That wasn't it. The number 1 ask from the government of Carmel was for a copy of their zoning ordinance. That just shows that the tourists come and shop, not with just their pocketbooks, but they shop with their eyes and their minds. They looked at why they wanted a zoning ordinance, and so many Japanese asked for it that we had to have it translated into Japanese. The people said: If this city can look so cute, why can't our city incorporate some of these ideas?

So that's what, I think, of travel and tourism. Obviously, businesses use these opportunities to take their associations—the dental association or the plumbers' association—and go have a conference.

Ms. BERKLEY. Las Vegas can accommodate everyone from the Baptists—because there are Baptist conventions in Las Vegas. I know that sounds unusual, but there are—to medical conventions, to dental conventions, as you said. We also are the site of some of the biggest conventions in the world—CES, the homebuilders, the shopping center convention every May. I mean these are huge conventions. Why do they come to Las Vegas? Why do they come to south Florida? Because we can accommodate this. We have got the best hotels. We have got the best transportation. We have got the best restaurants, the best shopping and the best facilities for conventions, large and small.

For the American business community to be turning their backs on us, not only is it bad for our business; it is bad for theirs because, contrary to what a lot of people think, a lot of business gets done in those meetings.

I know that the Congressman has got beautiful beaches, but that is an amenity that people take advantage of after they've done their business. Las Vegas has world-class entertainment and some other amenities as well. People don't concentrate on that. They're there to do business, and we make it possible for them in these business meetings to conduct serious business, and I am sure it's the same with your district as well.

Mr. FARR. Well, I think that we're all in the media. We have to get elected in the media, and we have to go out and take risks. It seems to me that what we need to do is realize, as a country, that we should not be condemning businesses that are doing things to help people have jobs.

□ 1845

The service industry is not always the best paying industry, and these are great jobs for students, great jobs for people coming up with limited skills at the entry level. The wonderful thing about it is that there is no sort of degree requirements so you don't have to have a college degree or Ph.D. to manage a big resort. If you have skills and you are able to deal with people and some business management skills, you can achieve that.

I think that what we're doing by watching people condemn business travel right now is we're just shooting ourselves in the foot.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. If I can add to that, I think let's talk the positives. We've been talking about a little bit of the risk side. But I think what we're all saying is the same thing. And that is the business side that gets done at conventions or travel to any one of our communities or any one of the 50 States, the notion of either playing golf in Florida or going to any one of the entertainment venues that any of us have or the ecotourism or the beautiful sceneries that attracts us, this is where business gets done. This is where families spend vacations.

And this is a time and place where people need to recognize, even though times are a little tough, business is going on, the economy is still going on, people are living their lives. You make maybe a different choice than maybe you did before, but there are great opportunities. But like everything else, supply and demand. Right now, you might even get a better buy than if you had planned a year ahead of time. And that's okay. That's just part of the deal, but that still makes the flow. That still makes the hotel full, it still makes the restaurants full, the suppliers and all of those things go.

I think it is a very exciting opportunity. And again, I just see this as an opportunity as we talk about these things back home what we're doing here in Washington on fixing the credit on the reinvestment act and the recovery act, this is all about putting all of the pieces in place so that everything will turn. And it will turn. It's just a matter of whether it is this amount of time or this amount of time. But we're going to get through this. And if it's a matter of going forward and planning the next trip, the next business meeting or whatever, that needs to go forward because every business needs to be in the best possible place when things start clicking again on all eight cylinders.

Mr. FARR. In January and February, the travel and tourism, the business travel was so far down that we lost $1 billion. Now, $1 billion is a lot of jobs of people that were laid off. And I think, unfortunately, we didn't have anything in this stimulus package precisely for travel and tourism. But if

you want to jump start a lot of jobs in America, this is the industry that has the most jobs when you think of all of the venues that you talk about.

Ms. BERKLEY. I would love to make two points, and it dovetails beautifully with what both of you are saying. I know you just mentioned that legislation that you're either introducing or thinking of introducing that would put some dollars into advertising the United States of America abroad so people will come and travel in the United States, which I think is a wonderful idea. And you're right, we're light years behind other countries in promoting our own.

But there are smaller ones that I was wondering what you thought of.

I tried to get in the stimulus package—and wasn't able to do so—but a $500 tax credit for business travel. If you're a business traveler and you want to bring your spouse, I think we should be—I think there should be a tax credit that will encourage men or women to take their spouses. It doubles the number of people that are coming to any one of our communities, and it also will help stimulate the economy and also keep families together. So I think that's wonderful.

The other thing—and we call it the three Martini lunch—but the reality is it is so much more important and significant than that. I would love to see a 100 percent deductibility of meals tax. I am sure the same is happening in your towns as mine, the restaurant business is kaput. People aren't coming to the towns so obviously restaurant business is down. Wouldn't it be a good idea for a business to help stimulate business? Most small businesses don't have boardrooms. What they have is the back booth of the local deli. And if they could get a 100 percent deduction on their meals, I would think that would not only help them to do their business, but it would also help the restaurant business as well.

Mr. FARR. We have a bill that's annually introduced by NEIL ABERCROMBIE, the Representative from Hawaii, and it is obviously in Hawaii's best interest to have a lot of tourists. That's what supports their infrastructure. And he's introduced the business travel deduction for spousal travel and also increasing the meal deduction. We have just been unable to get it out of the Ways and Means Committee. Maybe now as part of the stimulus we could encourage things like that.

Ms. BERKLEY. Heaven knows I have tried. I am a member of the Ways and Means Committee, but I am going to keep pushing this because I can't think of anything more stimulative to the tourism business and the restaurant business. And I know NEIL has been remarkable and, of course, NEIL ABERCROMBIE represents Hawaii. It has also been very hard hit, and he's down here every day fighting for the interests of his community, and, of course, Hawaii depends on tourists and business travelers.

Mr. FARR. What I like what both of you really understand—and I think this is the difficulty that the industry has—is that it is the biggest industry there is in the world, and yet it is not looked at as an industry because it is made up of parts. What are the parts? We can name them all night. But you just think about it. It is the rental car business, they have their own association; it is the hotel business, they have their own association; it is the airline business, they have their own association; it is the amusement parks, they have their own association; the restaurants, they have their own association; it is the Federal Government because we have national parks which are destination areas and tourism is essential for us to sustain those parks on the fees collected at the gates and the rates paid for the services.

So we're all in it, but what is more important it is really about America.

What I love about travel and tourism is that it is the spirit of our country. And as I say, I think that we travel within America to look and see what regions look like. We don't just go to see—we don't go to California to see what Californians look like or Florida to see what Floridians look like. It's really not just the people—people are the character. But it is also—and the arts, obviously, the creative arts. But it is these physical attractions: the beaches of Florida, the incredible expansion of ideas.

I think that one of the greatest shows that I've ever seen in my life—I have been raving about it. I saw it last summer. I was driving through Las Vegas on the way to our Denver convention. I stopped in Las Vegas and had never been there. And I went to Cirque du Soleil. That is a show that I think is—it is the epitome of creation, of musical talent and acrobatic talent; and it is something that every child would just love to see. I was just so disappointed—I went late at night—that I didn't have my grandchildren with me.

Ms. BERKLEY. Every time I go—I've seen all of the Cirque du Soleils a number of times. Whenever we get company in town, we take them to the Cirque du Soleil. Although we have got so many—we have Cher, we have Bette Midler. You name it, we have got it in Vegas. But every time I go, I see something new. There is so much on that stage going on. Going once simply isn't enough.

So I should invite you as my guest to come with your grandchildren. And I would be glad to host you.

Mr. FARR. If I had enough money, I would rent the whole theater and invite the whole world because I think it is something that everybody should see. It is a tribute to mankind's creativity.

See, I think that's what this is all about. You're not going to get a Cirque du Soleil in every city. You're going to have to travel somewhere. We always say in California that a tourist is anybody who is more than 60 miles away from home. So it makes most commuters in California tourists for a moment, because they are actually spending their money in another city when they go out for lunch, and they might go shopping there on their way home.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Every time I see Congresswoman BERKLEY, there is not enough infectious energy there of her passion for what she does. You are probably the greatest representative that Las Vegas has ever had because of your beliefs in the industry.

Ms. BERKLEY. I am wearing roulette earrings right now. So I take this very seriously.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. The issue with tourism, though, as you just said, it's ecotourism. It is environmental. It is the culture. It is the arts.

I see on the other side of the Chamber is the congressman from Ohio. I'm from Ohio originally. They have the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

But everywhere you go in the United States, there is the opportunity for tourism. And the most important recognition of this is it is about who we are as Americans, it's about the rest of the world getting a piece of our culture. We export a lot of great things in our entertainment industry. But bringing people to the United States, getting a feeling for what we're all about, our democracy, our values that express themselves in the way we maintain our national parks, the way we—the Everglades, which is one of the great creations. The Grand Canyon. These are all things that when people leave the country——

Mr. FARR. The Big Sur coast.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I think we could all go on for a while.

Ms. BERKLEY. Congressmen, I would go so far as to say it is patriotic to be traveling.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I would agree. It is patriotic for Americans to see America. And it is also a wonderful way of showing what America is like to people around the world because when they go home and they can share their experiences of what they have seen and what they have felt and what Americans are like and what this particular destination, this ocean, this Grand Canyon, Lake Erie, any combination of things that are part of who we are as a country, I think it adds so much to us as America. It promotes our interests worldwide as well.

Ms. BERKLEY. I believe that the Congressman from Ohio, who is here for another Special Order, has moved to join us in conversation.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I absolutely am moved by the conversation. And one of the things that puzzles me as we go through this financial mess is that people have decided to target trips and conventions and destinations and tourism, and that's exactly the wrong message.

I don't know how it is in your part of the world. In Cleveland, where we have the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and we

have great hotels, There are people who have to work in the hotels, there are people who cook the food, people who serve the food. And when you choke down and just make fun of people that go and have conventions or go traveling, you really are cutting off your nose to spite your face because you are drying up those jobs and you really are having a huge impact on the local economy. And I don't know any local economy that doesn't have as a component a healthy dose of dollars from tourism.

And so as people sort of say this is bad, that's bad, don't do this, one thing that they shouldn't target is, in fact, people need to travel, people need to have meetings, and people need to rent rooms and eat meals.

I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Ms. BERKLEY. We've been joined by one of our newest and finest Congressmen from the State of Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) who also represents a tourist-based economy in his district.

Mr. GRAYSON. I rise today to bring attention to the fact that there is increasing evidence to support the idea that taking vacations is necessary for your health.

Ms. BERKLEY. Your health?

Mr. GRAYSON. Your health. In times of economic uncertainty, it may seem hard to justify taking a vacation, but more than ever it is important to do so for your health.

The United States is a Nation of hard workers, but research shows that about a third of us in this country don't take all of the vacation days that we're entitled to. But according to Take Back Your Time, which is a nonprofit organization that studies issues related to overwork, there are 137 different countries that mandate paid vacation time, and the reason, typically, is health. The United States is not one of them.

With the number of Americans who said they would take a vacation is at a 30-year low, we need to take a look at the benefits of making that vacation that people have dreamed of a reality.

It is abundantly clear that individuals who take vacations are at a significantly lower risk for illness and disease. Likewise, those who do not take vacations are at a heightened risk of illness and disease. Even individuals without health problems can benefit from taking a vacation because it helps them to sleep better and it helps them to relax.

Ms. BERKLEY. When people come to Las Vegas, we don't want them sleeping.

Mr. GRAYSON. So it is sleeping afterward to make up for that.

A 2006 study was conducted to measure the benefits of taking vacations, and after a few days of vacation, the study found each participant was averaging more sleep and better quality sleep every night. There was also an 80 percent improvement in reaction times. And these benefits continued after they returned home. There is evidence that individuals who take vacations perform better at their jobs and they have higher job satisfaction.

The research has made such an impression that there is legislation being proposed here that would require a paid vacation time in the United States. It is currently called the Minimum Leave Protection Family Bonding and Personal Well-Being Act, and it would mandate 3 weeks of vacation every year.

I think that Americans need to relax. They need to consider this evidence about what is good for their health and their well-being, and they need to take time off. And as the Congressman from Orlando, I recommend they take a few days off at Disney World.

Ms. BERKLEY. I have also been in your fair city, and when my kids were little, younger, we had wonderful family vacations in Orlando. It was quite a treat for us. So you do have a beautiful community and people should be flocking there.

□ 1900

So we're discovering today that not only is this good for the economy, not only is tourism and business travel almost patriotic, but now it's also good for your health.

So I thank you very much for adding that component to our discussion.

Mr. GRAYSON. Thank you, too. I was in Las Vegas last year. I had a great time.

Ms. BERKLEY. Good. I hope you left a little money on the table.

Mr. FARR. I think it's important to realize that when we wanted to in Congress—we're essentially the one spouse, the father or the mother is serving in Congress, and taking away from the normal—we're not living with our family during the week. We're here in Washington. We go home on weekends.

But in order to get us to bond together with your new freshman class and all the rest of us, we took a retreat. Essentially, that was business travel. We went to Williamsburg. We did that as Democrats, and the Republicans the following week did the same thing.

And so why did we do that? We didn't think of ourselves going on a vacation or going on a boondoggle. It was really about how to do our professional lives better and incorporate our families so that we can incorporate them in our business. And I think that that's real important.

And what's happened in this economic crisis is the press has made that kind of experience for businesses and even for government, that you shouldn't be doing that; you should feel very guilty.

Ms. BERKLEY. Congressman, I think we've had——

Mr. FARR. I feel guilty about the people that are getting unemployed because nobody's going out to a restaurant or to——

Ms. BERKLEY. I feel exactly the way you do, but I think it's more than just the media. I think that Members of Congress and the administration have also contributed to this feeling that maybe there's something wrong about traveling.

But I think we've turned the corner, and it's becoming very obvious to me, especially in President Obama's latest comments about the importance of traveling and how much he appreciates the travel industry and how important business travel is. Members of Congress also appreciated it as well, and I'm really glad that you brought that up.

Mr. FARR. I think this last statement about how it's good for our mental health is absolutely true.

Ms. BERKLEY. We could use some good mental health in Congress, that's for sure.

Mr. FARR. And for the Nation. I think we need to be proud of who we are, and you know, going to a ball game is a tourist experience.

Ms. BERKLEY. It's a wonderful experience.

Mr. FARR. And if you went to that ball game out of town, you really would be a tourist. If you go in your hometown, it's something you do because it's a local activity, but it really is an experience. You being in that ballpark, you spent money to get there. You're spending money on food. You're spending money on programs, on the paraphernalia. That's all part of the tourist experience.

Ms. BERKLEY. It's as American as apple pie. Ball games, sharing them with your kids, with your spouse, I mean, what could be better? And if you could bring your whole business team with you, too, that's a wonderful way to bond and be more effective as a team.

There was something you said earlier, but I wanted to share something very personal. You know, even though we're friends, and you know, we know each other here in Congress, sometimes we don't know about each other's personal background. But something that you said touched a chord with me because it seemed like you were talking about my own family.

My parents were driving across country. Everything we owned was in a U-Haul hooked up to the back bumper of our car. And my father was a waiter when I was growing up. We lived in upstate New York. We drove across country because my dad had a letter of introduction to get a job in a restaurant in southern California.

We stopped in Las Vegas for the night, and obviously we never left. And on a waiter's salary, my dad was a waiter at the old Sands Hotel which was very famous for the Rat Pack and just a very exciting time in Las Vegas' history. But on a waiter's salary, he was able to put a roof over our head, food on the table, clothes on our back, and two daughters through college and law school. That's not so bad on a waiter's salary. As a matter of fact, he's 84 years old now, still working, and very proud of his accomplishments.

That's what the tourism industry and that's what business travel means to

me. It uplifts families. It gives people jobs. They don't have to be lavish jobs. We're not talking about people that make millions of dollars. We're talking about people, middle-income families, that make enough money because they are part of the tourism industry, because they are part of the business travel industry, that they can support their families.

And then, I'm a first generation college-goer. No one in my family ever went to college until I did, and it changes lives. And making sure you've got that job, that good job security, you have a healthy economy, that's what we're talking about. And business travel is so much a part of this country and so much a part of our economy.

Mr. FARR. That's a very moving story, and just God bless your dad. What a wonderful person he must be.

My daughter said something to me that really touched me just a couple of weeks ago. She said, Dad, I'm so thankful that I have a job. And she used to be a waitress. And she said, I just know so many people that have been laid off, even some of her friends who have been waitresses, college graduates who are coming home but in between finding a job are doing—she said, you know what you and Mom could do, she said next time you go out, tip a little bit higher.

Ms. BERKLEY. You know, I worked my way——

Mr. FARR. This is my daughter saying this, give more to the people. I mean, when you think about that service and that tipping and that concept of giving, I think it's so fundamental to our American culture that, as we said, travel and tourism isn't a luxury. It's a part of the American culture, the dream, to enjoy oneself.

Ms. BERKLEY. We are joined by the other Congresswoman from Las Vegas.

Mr. FARR. We've got the dynamic duo here. This is incredible.

Ms. BERKLEY. Congresswoman DINA TITUS has joined us.

Mr. FARR. Well, welcome. You're a new freshwoman, fresh Congresswoman to this, and it's exciting to see you so interested in travel and tourism, obviously representing Las Vegas, and I'll let you talk.

But I also have to say that from what I've heard, the best deal in America is to take your family to Las Vegas right now. And as you said, they're almost giving away hotel rooms, and air travel, if you go by air, is just dirt cheap. And the experience that one can have, it's probably in some cases cheaper than staying at home.

Ms. BERKLEY. It's the best bang for your buck, there's no doubt about it. And as we keep saying, not only can you have some fun, you can actually get some business done. So we want to encourage all of those conventions that had second thoughts, that decided to cancel their trips to Vegas, their conventions, their conferences, think again. Come back. You can have a wonderful conference and enjoy yourselves as well and save your company some money by doing it.

Mr. FARR. Smaller businesses, you can come to Monterey peninsula, Monterey——

Ms. BERKLEY. The aquarium——

Mr. FARR. We have got a lot of great places to visit.

Ms. BERKLEY. As you know, my in-laws live in your district. So we go up and we visit them often. It's a wonderful place to be.

Mr. FARR. Welcome to this discussion.

Ms. TITUS. Well, thank you so much for letting me join you and thank you, Congresswoman BERKLEY, for organizing this and giving me an opportunity. I know you've been talking about some of the issues already, and nobody is a stronger advocate for tourism and activities in Las Vegas than my colleague SHELLEY BERKLEY.

So I just want to add the fact that, yes, Las Vegas is a wonderful bargain and a wonderful place to come. You know, it just kind of added insult to injury when people canceled the convention, paid a cancellation fee, and then went to another city and paid a higher rate. That makes no sense whatsoever.

In Las Vegas, we have fabulous convention facilities. Nobody can feed a room of 5,000 eight courses and serve the line on time like you can in Las Vegas. So we do want you to come back.

And I was touched by the story of your daughter because that is so true. We shouldn't be thinking of this just in terms of statistics, and the statistics are staggering, but we need to think of it in terms of people.

Many of the people who live in District 3 work in the tourism industry. It's not just along the famous Las Vegas Strip, but we have the Red Rock Casino. We've got the Green Valley Ranch. We've got the new Inn that's opened, a lot of areas outside of the strip that are in District 3. So those are jobs.

Las Vegas, Nevada, has the highest unemployment rate it's had in 25 years. You know, we used to think we were recession-proof, and if you had two nickels to rub together you'd come out there to try to change your luck. That's not been the case recently. As people lose disposable income, they're not coming. Those tourism dollars aren't there, and people are losing jobs. If you lose a job or you lose hours on your job, or those tips aren't there, if you have one member of the family who is a tip earner then that leads to another problem which is the housing foreclosure.

So when you're talking about where to have your convention and what the pluses are to having it in Las Vegas, remember, those are very real people who are making those beds, serving that food, dealing those cards, dancing in that chorus line. Those are real folks that live in the district, go to school there, obey the laws, and just try to do the right thing.

So I'm very glad to be here tonight to add my voice to the notion that we've got to do more business travel and to put Las Vegas back on the list of preferred destinations.

Ms. BERKLEY. Well, you know, you and I have lived in Las Vegas for an awfully long time and have been very active in the community. I know that Las Vegas has this reputation and the people think of it as a gaming community, and indeed, we do have the best gaming on the planet. The most fabulous hotels, restaurants, you name it, we've got it, great entertainment, but there's much more to our community than that.

And I was just heartsick when Las Vegas was attacked so savagely over the last few weeks here in Congress and frightening businesses. They didn't want to come to us for fear there would be some kind of taint.

Now, you and I know you raise families in Las Vegas. There's Saturday soccer. We have per capita the most churches and synagogues and mosques of any other city in the United States. It's a wonderful place to raise a family, but we can't raise our families unless people come and spend their tourist and their business dollars in our town.

Ms. TITUS. Well, you're so right, and if you look at our population, you know, we're very American. The rest of the country is becoming more like us. We have the fastest growing senior population, fastest growing Hispanic and Asian population, fastest growing school age population. We really are a southwestern city, and so to try to paint us with just those kinds of, oh, descriptions or adjectives or hyperbole is just not fair. We are a good community, a place to live, and we are a family and go to work, go to church, go to school. So I want people to see the other side of Las Vegas, the real people side of it.

You know, I hope to do something along those lines to change the conversation a little in my role on the Homeland Security Committee. You know, there's no place that has more high-tech security personnel and equipment than Las Vegas. Everybody's heard of the ''eye in the sky'' and everywhere could learn something from us in how those giant hotels deal with emergency situations and what we would do in the case of an emergency on New Year's Eve when we have all those people on the Las Vegas Strip watching fireworks.

So I'm trying to get some more cooperation between government and the private sector to come and look back of the house to see what all those things are that we have to offer just to change the conversation, so you can see another side of Las Vegas.

Ms. BERKLEY. Well, I think that's a great idea, and you know, we are a southwest town with a bit of a kick, and we love our kick. I mean, it's just a wonderful community. You didn't grow up there. I grew up there. A great town, great facilities, great convention town, get a lot of business done, almost patriotic to do this.

When we heard from Congressman GRAYSON, he was talking about your health depends on coming to Las Vegas and Monterey and South Florida.

□ 1915

There are so many communities in this country that have really been hard hit because businesses aren't holding conferences. You can go to Miami, Atlanta, Atlantic City, New York, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Monterey. You name it.

We've got to get people traveling again and we've got to get our business community to come back and start conducting their business as they've become accustomed to. And, again, the caveat is we are not suggesting that these companies use taxpayer dollars in order to do their travel. But that is just a little itty bitty speck on business travel.

Mr. FARR. You can use your tax refund to do travel, if you get one.

Ms. BERKLEY. Absolutely. Ninety-five percent of the American people will be getting a tax cut.

Mr. FARR. I want to build on your comment about homeland security because as co-Chair of the Travel and Tourism Caucus, we've been looking at Las Vegas, too. One, you have the largest hotel capacity in the United States. I believe that the goal is to have 100,000 rooms.

Ms. BERKLEY. No, we're at 140,000 now.

Mr. FARR. Well, you think about that. That means, theoretically, 140,000 people could check in and check out in the same day. And so your airport is one of the most sophisticated airports in the United States. And you're starting to—which I think is a marvelous concept—look at wouldn't it be a lot faster to move people if, when they check in their baggage to go to Las Vegas, that that baggage then is in their room when they check in. When they leave their room, they leave the baggage there and it's at the like baggage pickup when they go home. The idea is that, one, for security purposes. You do this perimeter screening and you don't have to do it in the airport.

Secondly, they find what slows people down is sort of schlepping the bags. You've got to go pick them up and then you've got to lift them and you've got to get into a vehicle. That just slows things down. If people didn't have to carry all that luggage, they could move a lot of people a lot faster.

So there's a lot of lessons to learn here on just how—and, frankly, we've also taken from the hotel industry the way TSA—the agents who are at the gates—could learn much more hospitality treatment of not being rude to passengers. Just have a little bit more of a professional flare while they also do their security business.

So there's a lot we're learning from your city that has applications throughout this United States. I hope that we can model it. I wish that the United States would talk more and the President would talk more—whomever the President is—but President Obama would really talk about the fulfillment of the American Dream and the realization of the greatness of our country by encouraging people to really see more of it and experience it. His city of Chicago is a big tourist draw and convention draw. He understands that.

Every community has a soul. Every community has something that can build upon that is really great. I think we are still in the developmental stages of trying to pull out the essence of that soul—what the natives in that community do, the historic aspects of the community. People settled there and built a town, and there's something in that that will attract people to come and see it.

There's so much opportunity to expand in travel and tourism—we just have to take it away from something of being a luxury item. It's not that anymore.

Ms. BERKLEY. Well, I think DINA knows that President Obama has announced that he's coming to Las Vegas in the spring. I believe that he's going to be using that opportunity to say exactly what you're saying, Congressman, that it's part of the American Dream, this travel, and encourage people not only to do leisure travel, which Las Vegas is famous for, but business travel as well. And we're famous for that as well.

Ms. TITUS. I think travel is so educational. I certainly agree with what you're saying about how it enriches a person's life.

When I was growing up, my father would put my sister and me in the car—the station wagon—and we would drive across country, hitting all the National Parks. So that is something that I don't guess we do too much anymore.

If you want to look for the heart and soul of a small community, take that trip. Because there are places around the country that have the biggest rubber band ball or the biggest stack of pancakes or the biggest ear of corn, country fairs and home cooking and boiled peanuts. That's the way you really learn about this country and learn who your neighbors and fellow countrymen are.

Education is a great result of that kind of travel. That also builds tolerance and understanding when you can see and know people who aren't necessarily just like yourself. That comes from travel.

Mr. FARR. What I've also noticed is that people are very interested in what we call ''watchable wildlife.'' The history is you go to zoos to see animals. But they really want to see them in the out-of-doors in their natural state.

Ms. BERKLEY. We have some wildlife in Las Vegas, you know.

Mr. FARR. The national parks and the national forest. But I was in Big Sur last weekend and I was talking to one of the hotels there. They were telling me that people—and they charge a lot for their rooms. But people call up and say, If I book a room in this hotel in Big Sur, can I see a condor? Because there are very few condors and we're monitoring them and we have a radio device on them, we know where they are. So the answer is ''yes'' because we know where they are. We can guarantee that you will see a condor. Other people will want to know about seeing sea otters.

So, living on the coast, what you realize is that natural flora and fauna—redwood trees that are native—that people want to come and see the out-of-doors. What I find is that you can't make people an environmentalist, so to speak, in appreciation for a living environment until you have been there and then also had it explained to you. Once you do, you get it.

So this whole issue of why do we need to fight global warming and what is it doing to our natural systems, you can understand that once you get that experience in the national parks or get that experience being out-of-doors.

So it's really all our culture. It's sort of the creativity of what you have done in Las Vegas, plus areas that just have the natural environment preserved in its natural state. Both add to this mosaic of travel and tourism.

Ms. BERKLEY. I think that is so eloquently put. I also want to remind people, especially the business traveler, that it's a good break from your business meeting if you come to Las Vegas. We have Red Rock Canyon, which is spectacular; we have the Grand Canyon, that is even more spectacular; and, of course, the Hoover Dam.

So you can do your business, you can do your gambling, you can eat the finest food, and then you can go outside of the city and enjoy the natural wonders of this beautiful, beautiful country of ours.

Ms. TITUS. I would mention along these same lines that Las Vegas plays a big part in other things that you don't think about. Right now there's a big emphasis on renewable energy. Certainly, we are the sunniest State in the country in Nevada. Everybody goes to Las Vegas for the wonderful weather. They're calling me every day to tell me how warm it is there compared to how cool it is here.

But the architecture that relates to that renewable energy is very interesting. A very famous book was written about the architecture of Las Vegas a number of years ago. They can go back and write another one now because there was a time not too long ago that of the top 10 LEED-certified green buildings in the country. Seven of those projects were along the Las Vegas Strip.

So it's quite interesting to look at it just from an architectural environmental standpoint, as well as just from the beauty of the decor. So that is something also we have to offer.

Ms. BERKLEY. Well, I think we have spoken for about an hour. We have had a very spirited discussion and I think a

very enlightening and educated one. I hope that the people that are watching come to appreciate the value of travel on vacation, family travel, just a getaway for the two of you, or, more significantly, for the discussion tonight, business travel, which is so important to the economies of every State in the Union.

I don't know whether you knew this—I'm sure you do as chairman of the Tourism Caucus—but in 30 States tourism is the first, second, or third most important industry. For a city like ours and a State like ours, obviously it's number one. But for 30 other States we're talking first, second, or third. That is huge.

We want to invite everybody back. Do those business meetings. Stop canceling. Stop being foolish. Enjoy and do your business in Las Vegas, in Monterey, in Florida, Atlantic City, New York, Miami. We need you.

Mr. FARR. Be healthy. Explore more.

Ms. BERKLEY. That's perfect. And thank you all for sharing this hour with me. I've learned things from everybody that has participated. I appreciate everything that you have said. Thank you so much.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleague from Nevada, Ms. BERKLEY, and to thank her for holding this special order tonight. I agree that corporations who accept taxpayer funded bailouts should curb lavish expenses that do little to improve their profitability. However, legitimate business functions held at casino-hotels in Atlantic City, Las Vegas, and elsewhere should not be the subject of criticism by the media and government officials.

In my district, Atlantic City casinos are our region's single largest employer. Unfortunately, like most businesses, they are suffering in the current economic climate. Gaming revenue is down to its lowest point in more than a decade, thousands of employees have been laid off and construction projects have ground to a halt.

Corporate gatherings, conventions and other functions bring thousands of business travelers to Atlantic City, filling our retail outlets, restaurants and hotel rooms. The continuance of these legitimate business functions is critical if our region is going to pull out of this recession, put people back to work and expand our economy.

That is why I am outraged by the administration's latest salvo against our casino-hotels and the thousands of workers they employ. Forcing non profits and local governments who receive stimulus funds to abstain from holding legitimate events at casino-hotels is appalling. In my district, several nonprofits and government agencies hold important community outreach events at gaming properties in Atlantic City because these convenient venues are often the only ones able to accommodate large numbers of people. For instance, our local Workforce Investment Board regularly holds job fairs and workforce development seminars at casino-hotels in Atlantic City. Under the administration's new rules, these services would likely have to be curtailed at a time when they are critically needed and the economic recovery of our region's largest employer would be further delayed.

I call on the administration to back down from this flawed, unjust, and unwarranted policy and instead partner with us to get our travel based economy in Southern New Jersey, Las Vegas and other destinations back on track. I also urge the media to immediately cease their hyperbolic attacks on legitimate corporate travel in this country. I thank the gentle lady from Nevada who Co-Chairs the Congressional Gaming Caucus with me for her leadership and I look forward to working with her and all of our colleagues to get our economy moving again.

AIG BONUSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POLIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank you for the recognition, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the minority leader for granting us this hour. I'm going to be joined by at least two other Members, Mr. TIBERI and Mr. AUSTRIA, also of Ohio.

We're going to talk a little bit about what occurred last week and the week before. I know the Speaker will remember that the Capitol was sort of roiled, and our constituents continue to be upset, as well they should, over the news that somehow, after getting billions of dollars of taxpayer funds, the insurance company, AIG, awarded $170 million in bonuses.

A lot of people came to the floor last week and said they were shocked. As I said last week, I'm really shocked at the shock. Because I can't figure out how some people in this Chamber and at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue can be shocked when they approved the language that authorized the bonuses.

Just a little bit of history here, Mr. Speaker. When the economic recovery plan or the stimulus bill was making its way through the United States Congress, there was an amendment offered by two Senators, a Democratic Senator from Oregon, Senator WYDEN, and a Republican Senator from Maine, Senator SNOWE. That would have put a limitation on bonuses like in the AIG case and in other cases that basically said that if you're receiving billions of dollars in taxpayer funds to bail you out, perhaps you shouldn't be giving millions dollars away in bonuses at this moment in time. If you're not taking the taxpayer money, you run your business the way you see fit.

Well, that amendment by Senators SNOWE and WYDEN was adopted by a voice vote in the Senate and was included in the Senate version of the stimulus bill. So I read about it in the newspaper and I thought: Okay, the bill is in pretty good shape.

When the bill went into the conference committee—and, Mr. Speaker, I know you know this, but for those who may not be conversant with how things work here, we pass a bill over here, the Senate passes a bill over there, then each House appoints a few Members and they meet in a room and they sort out the differences between the two bills and then we eventually get a conference report.

Now, in years past—this is my 15th year in the Congress—that conference committee always included Republicans and Democrats. We, being Republicans, were in the majority party for 12 years. The Democrats would come into the room, the Republicans would come into the room, the Representatives would come into the room, the Senators would come into the room, and we'd hash out the differences and then at the end of the process everybody who's on the conference committee would sign the report, and that's what you have.

Sadly, even though people have discussed this being the most transparent administration, the most transparent Congress in the history of the country, no Republicans were invited into the conference room. Clearly, what we have seen—sadly, what we have seen—is that this Congress is about as transparent as this envelope. We are not being included. You know what? We don't have to be included. We are in the minority, and clearly the majority party can write legislation as they see fit. But what they can't do is what happened last week.

So in this conference room all of a sudden somehow the Snowe-Wyden language is removed that would have stopped these bonuses from happening. And the words behind me—they're only about 50 words on the chart behind me—were inserted.

This language specifically authorized the payment of millions of dollars of bonuses to people at AIG and anywhere else. So anybody who voted—when it came to us back in the House for a vote, this language was included in the bill.

So the reason I said I was shocked at people's shock is that anybody that voted for the stimulus bill voted to give and authorize and protect the bonuses at AIG and any other company that has taken billion of dollars through the bailout program.

We don't know—and I know the Speaker will remember last week we were on the floor for about an hour trying to figure out how it did it happen. We started with I talked about the fact that there's a face book. There are 435 Members of Congress, 100 Senators. We began crossing them out. We got down to about 520 during the course of that hour. I indicated we would come back and report to the Speaker the progress of this search. I'm pleased to report to you that we have made significant progress. My friends and I are going to talk about that this evening.

First of all, we can remove all 178 Republicans because there were no Republican Representatives in the room. We can also remove all 41 Republican Senators because they were not in the room. And I mentioned that we also have this Senate race that is unresolved in Minnesota so we can cross off

Al Franken and Senator Coleman. They are not the culprits in this particular case.

So we got down to a smaller group that we are going to talk about. But then our group expanded because there are a couple of news reports out that there were people from the administration that were also participating in these negotiations. So we had to add a few suspects to figure it out.

What is disappointing is that in a transparent administration, in a transparent Congress, people make mistakes. Everybody makes a mistake. I probably made three before lunch today. But when you make a mistake, you should say: I made a mistake.

□ 1930

What is not acceptable is to compound the mistake by pretending you didn't know about it; and then when you are caught, you come up with some goofy piece of legislation like we had on the floor last week to tax people at 90 percent.

And I have got to tell you, that was political theater. It never is going to become law. These people that are so outraged about AIG executive bonuses, they are going to get their bonuses because that bill is not going anywhere. My friend STEVE AUSTRIA is going to talk about that in just a second, but that is never going to become law. That was to provide cover for people who voted for the Economic Recovery Bill, because they found out, sadly, that they had authorized these 50 words that protected the AIG bonuses, and now they are shocked.

Now, on our side, I have to tell you that we were kind of saddened. Even though we don't need to be invited into the rooms, we don't have to be invited to negotiate, before the stimulus bill came to a vote in the House a motion was made, and the motion said that before any Member of Congress is asked to vote on the stimulus bill we are going to have 48 hours to read it. Every Member of this House, every Republican and every Democrat that was here voted to give the Members 48 hours to read the bill. And if you think about that, Mr. Speaker, that is probably a good idea, because the bill was over 1,000 pages long.

Well, sometime between Tuesday when every Member said we are going to get 48 hours, and Friday when we voted on the bill, people forgot that promise. And on our side, at least, we were given 90 minutes, 90 minutes to read 1,000 pages to determine whether or not we could be supportive of the President's most important domestic economic policy position.

I voted ''no,'' and I don't have any problem with the fact that I voted ''no.'' There were some good things in the stimulus bill, there were horrible things in the stimulus bill. But I couldn't go home to Cleveland and say to people, yeah, I voted for it, because I didn't read it. And I don't think any Member of this Chamber read the bill. If they did, more power to them, but I doubt everybody read the thousand pages.

But what that leads to is an embarrassment, and the embarrassment is everybody that voted for the stimulus bill voted to give the bonuses to AIG. And then to cover their tracks, they come up with this, oh, let's tax at 90 percent.

Which, if you think about it, that is pretty silly, too, because let's say the guy at AIG got $5 million in the bonus. Under that bill, he still gets to keep one-half million dollars. So if you are so outraged, why don't you take all of the money away from them? Forget about the Constitutional arguments and the bills of attainder and all that other business. It was political theater, and it makes you sad when that happens.

So we are going to spend the remainder of our time this evening attempting to sort of ferret out who was in the room. And I have good news, because the Secretary of the Treasury was at the Financial Services Committee today, Mr. Geithner, and the Secretary was asked if he was in the room when this happened and he said he was not. So we can cross off the Secretary of the Treasury; he was not in the room when this was done.

Last week, during the course of the debate on Ms. KILROY's resolution saying that the administration was doing everything that they could to stop these bonuses, we asked the chairman of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. He said he wasn't in the room, so he is off the list as well. And the Speaker actually indicated the other day, Speaker PELOSI, that nobody from the House did it, and so we have to look elsewhere, I guess. And we are going to talk a little bit about that.

But first, to sort of set the table on this bill, this 90 percent tax bill that was political theater, that was a farce, that was a fig tree to cover people who had made a mistake, I want to yield for a minute to my friend STEVE AUSTRIA from Ohio just to talk about what we think the prognosis is for this tax bill.

Mr. AUSTRIA. I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding, I think next to the leader, our senior Member from Ohio. I thank you for yielding. And it is an important issue.

Being a new Member of Congress, having served less than 100 days in Congress, to be faced with what we are facing right now, the amount of spending, the amount of borrowing, the amount of debt that is accumulating. I didn't come to Congress—I have three sons at home—to pass this type of debt on to our children.

But specifically talking about the bailout, talking about AIG and what has happened, one of the first bills that I was asked to vote on was the second half of the TARP, the financial market bailout, the $700 billion bailout, something that I felt when I was running for office looking from the outside in was a bad idea, for government to get involved, to not have accountability, not have transparency, and not have a plan; have, as the gentleman from Ohio described, a plan that was brokered behind closed doors by a small group of individuals. As a Member of Congress, I have to tell you that my views haven't changed.

On that particular bill, when we voted on that bill I could not find answers on how the $350 billion, the first half of the $700 billion bailout, how that money was spent, could not find as far as any type of specific plan from the Department of the Treasury on how they were going to turn around the financial markets. There was no accountability, and I had a real problem with that with the TARP bill.

Now, as the gentleman from Ohio talked about with the stimulus bill, language that was inserted in a bill, and which Leader BOEHNER stood on this floor and held up 1,100 pages, approximately, that not one Member had the opportunity to read before we voted on, to me, that is a terrible reason to be passing a bill. We should have had an opportunity to read that bill and understand what was in it before we voted on it.

But when you have no accountability, when you have no transparency, when you have no specific plan on how you are going to use that money to turn the financial markets around, when you have no opportunity to read the stimulus or spending bill, what that equals is disaster. And that is what we saw last week. We saw outrage. We saw the American people beginning to understand for the first time what was happening here in D.C. when 160-some million dollars of bonuses were paid out to executives and employees, of their hard-earned money, $170 billion of their hard-earned taxpayer money that was used to bail out the same company.

I do believe we had some opportunities to do better. In an effort to try to resolve this situation, one of the things that I did was stand up with 14 members of our freshman class and introduce a bill to try to get that money back; doing in a different way, rather than raising taxes at 90 percent, getting 100 percent of that money back, asking the Department of the Treasury to use every resource they had available to get that money back within 2 weeks; to ensure that any future contracts, that the Department of the Treasury would sign off on those contracts and know what we are using that bailout money for. After all, the government now owns, I believe it is, 80 percent of AIG.

Unfortunately, we haven't had any hearings on that bill, and it doesn't appear as though it is going to move. The opposite side decided they were going to come up with a different solution with a 90 percent tax, to try to move that forward.

But what is happening here, and I know many people are getting their

quarterly statements, their financial statements, they are beginning to see their accounts, their 401(k) and retirement accounts, their children's education funds, their savings accounts. They are down significantly. We have had calls into our office where people have lost 40 percent, 50 percent of their money, and they are very concerned as to what is happening with the financial market bailouts. And I think we have an opportunity and we have an obligation to turn things around, to ensure that the taxpayers' dollars, the $700 billion that passed this body and is being used to bail out the financial markets, that there is accountability on the how that money is being spent, that there is transparency, so we know exactly what is happening, that there is a plan in place so that we can better understand.

What we are finding out is that some of the dollars that have been spent were bad investments. I am looking at testimony from Elizabeth Warren from the Congressional Oversight Panel to the Senate Banking Committee, that talks about how the Treasury invested about $254 billion in assets that were worth only approximately $176 billion, a shortfall of $78 billion. We can do better than that.

When you talk about the $165 million bonuses that were paid out to these employees—and I am looking at a news article, this is from the New York Post last week, ''Fully, 73 executives got $1 million or more each, of whom 22 were paid at least $2 million, while seven got $4 million, and one lucky duck pocketed a cool $6.4 million.''

We can do better than that. The American people expect us to do better than that and deserve better than that. But what all this is doing is creating uncertainty in the market when you don't have a plan and there is no accountability for these dollars.

In my prior life before being a State legislator for 10 years and coming to Congress, I was a small business owner, I was a financial advisor. And one thing I can tell you that is certain is that our financial markets, our businesses, they don't like uncertainty. And we are seeing big fluctuations in the market right now, we are seeing a lot of downturn in the market right now I think because of that uncertainty.

I think because of public pressure, the American people stepping forward and saying enough is enough and being outraged about this, that we are finally starting to see a plan brought forward that we hope will help resolve some of this problem that has transpired as a result of this legislation.

I will yield back my time to the gentleman from Ohio. I thank you for the opportunity to speak on this, and thank you for bringing this issue forward. It is very important.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I want to thank my friend from Ohio (Mr. AUSTRIA). Your comments really bring out why that tax piece of legislation that was political theater, that was a fraud was such a lousy piece of legislation.

If we take the fellow, or it might have been a woman, that you have just identified that got $6.4 million worth of bonuses, the Democratic tax bill that used the Tax Code to punish people for the first time, at least in my memory, to that extent, that person still got to keep $640,000. Why? Why? If they shouldn't have gotten any money, they shouldn't have gotten any money. So why do you give them just 10 percent?

I promised, Mr. Speaker, that we would attempt to move forward and try to solve this mystery. Now, it would be easier if somebody would just come forward and say ''I did it.'' You know, ''I did it. I am Professor Plum; I am Colonel Mustard, and I did it.'' But we don't have anybody that has been forthcoming on Capitol Hill or down at the White House or at the Department of the Treasury, except for Mr. Geithner and BARNEY FRANK and the people that I mentioned that were not in the room when this happened.

So with apologies to our friends from Hasbro, we have sort of put this in the form of the game of Clue, which a lot of us, Mr. Speaker, played as we were growing up, we play with our kids. And if you are not familiar with the game of Clue, Mr. Speaker, basically a crime is committed and the junior detectives have to try and solve the crime. And the successful person, the winner, identifies where it happened, who did it, and with what weapon.

Now, we start with a pretty good advantage here this evening because we know what the weapon is. We know that somebody took out the language that would have prohibited these bonuses that were paid out and put in the language that is over Mr. TIBERI's shoulder. And so we know it was done in writing, and the weapon at the bottom of this chart was a pen. So we are one-third of the way there, and now we just need to figure out where it took place and by whom.

And just to sort of go around with the whoms, we don't have Colonel Mustard, we don't have Ms. Scarlet, but what we do have are people who were either conferees or made observations or news accounts that we will get into in a minute indicate were in the room.

Beginning at the bottom on my right is CHARLES RANGEL of New York, who is the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; he was a conferee, he signed the conference report.

Next is Rahm Emanuel, who is the President's Chief of Staff, used to serve with us here in the Congress representing a part of Illinois in the United States Congress.

At the top, the former president of Harvard University, Larry Summers, who is now an economic advisor to President Obama.

At the top is Senator DODD. Now, I have to say Senator DODD in a lot of early news accounts was blamed for it. I am feeling kind of bad for Senator DODD, because the last thing I saw him say was that, ''Somebody at Treasury said to put it in, and so my staff put it in.'' But clearly Senator DODD is getting fingered for a lot of this. But if he did it, he should say so. If he didn't do so, he should say, ''I didn't do it.''

Over in the upper left-hand corner is the Speaker of the House, Ms. PELOSI of California. Again, the news accounts kind of indicate that this took place in her office, but we are not going to get there yet.

HARRY REID, if you read, Mr. Speaker, yesterday's Roll Call, people have expressed concern as to the fact that he appointed himself as the majority leader in the Senate as a conferee, and that he may or may not have ties to AIG, and some questions are being raised.

And, at the bottom is DAVID OBEY, the very distinguished chairman of the Appropriations Committee who was also a conferee and in the room at least some of the time.

□ 1945

But let's talk for just a minute, Mr. TIBERI. Can you shed any light based on what you know or what you have heard that may help us sort of narrow this thing down?

Mr. TIBERI. Thank you for your leadership. I would certainly like to thank you for bringing this matter to light this evening and last week. I know both of you have shared the same experience that I have shared back in my district. People are dying to know what happened and when? Who was responsible for this? As you said, the Senator from Connecticut has said that somebody from the administration or somebody from Treasury instructed them to put this language in the bill.

I think it is interesting to note the language behind me that you talked about earlier wouldn't have gotten in the bill if, if we had transparency from the beginning, something that the new President has talked about, talked about during the campaign, talked about repeatedly during the campaign. In fact, as both of you know, our Speaker of the House talked about transparency before she became Speaker and how this was going to be the most transparent House ever, the people's House, and the fact is, not only on this legislation, but this certainly demonstrates it, but on countless pieces of legislation, there has been anything but transparency. And transparency has led to what this chart is really all about, and that is finding out who knew what when?

People in my district are outraged that this language ended up in this stimulus bill without anybody knowing about it, anybody but apparently the author of the amendment, but most everyone else, allegedly, didn't know about this important wording that allowed AIG officials to receive millions of dollars in bonuses.

In fact, I don't know if the gentleman has an answer for this, as I digress a bit, there was a news report today that

over half of the bonuses that were paid to AIG went to non-Americans.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Taking 1 minute of my time. I have not seen that news report. The news report that I'm familiar with—and if that is true, that is kind of shocking—is that 11 people of the 73 didn't work for the company anymore. So you have 11 out of 73 who aren't even at AIG anymore, and so if they are retention bonuses, they didn't work so well, because they don't work for AIG anymore.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. TIBERI. We are getting more questions on the table than answers. And that is what happens when you don't have transparency. That is what happens when backroom deals are cut, backroom deals on this stimulus bill that was done back in February.

In fact, Mr. LATOURETTE, I will quote from a Los Angeles Times article back in February that in the first major piece of legislation pushed by the President, transparency was missing. In fact, the President has no constitutional authority to set rules for Congress. But he suggested he would use his influence to see that Congress doesn't conduct its work ''in the dead of night and behind closed doors,'' which is exactly what happened in this process.

The Times article goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, maybe we can add a picture here to your graph, important negotiating sessions devoted to the stimulus took place in a congressional office outside public view, Representative HENRY A. WAXMAN (D) Beverly Hills said he was in the meeting about the stimulus plan Tuesday night in the office of House Speaker NANCY PELOSI (D) San Francisco. Among the participants was White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel.

So, one person who says he was in the meeting in negotiations was the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee. But still, my question back to you would be, do you have to be in the meeting to instruct conferees in the dead of night in one of these offices to put something in this bill? Because you could still have the Treasury Secretary instruct everybody else that this is an important measure by telephone, couldn't you?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, you could. And taking back my time, I will tell you that there are telephones, but the gentleman is making our task much more difficult if you continue to widen the net and now we have to deal with Mr. WAXMAN and others. But sure, conceivably.

I would just say that today—I don't think it was under oath, but you're not supposed to lie to Congress—the Treasury Secretary did indicate that he only found out about it on March 10, which is pretty amazing, and that he understands that staff did it, but he really doesn't know a lot about it, and he knows he didn't do it. So, yeah, it could have been somebody outside the room.

Mr. TIBERI. If the gentleman will yield, certainly I think as we continue forward having a special investigation, an Inspector General report trying to get to the bottom of this, if someone doesn't come forward and say, yes, this is the language that I wanted, and this is the reason why, and X number of people that were paid were paid retention bonuses, and by the way, we weren't able to retain them, and by the way, over half the bonuses were paid to non-Americans, which is outrageous in the first place.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Taking back my time, I thank the gentleman for that. And I hope we don't need to have an investigation. I would hope that whoever screwed up would come forward and say, do you know what? I did it. And then tell us why he or she did it rather than hiding behind the skirts of staff and hiding behind this bogus tax bill that we did last week. I would really hope somebody would come forward and do it.

But the other thing I would tell my friend is we don't need to wait for an investigation. Tomorrow in the House Financial Services Committee chaired by the aforementioned Congressman FRANK of Massachusetts, a number of us have filed something known as a ''resolution of inquiry.'' And the resolution of inquiry requests the Treasury Department to provide to the Congress, not to me, not to the Republicans, but to the Congress, all documents that they have in their possession that will help us identify—if the person won't come forward and say, ''I did it,'' then this resolution of inquiry would direct them to give us the documents so we can figure it out and not add expense on top of the taxpayer in trying to ferret out who did this thing.

Again, I wish somebody, as I said last week, would just man up and say they did it.

Mr. TIBERI. Would the gentleman yield? And you're being far too modest because the resolution does much more than that. And in fact, in reading a poll today, over half of the American people believe that AIG should be broken up. And part of your resolution does just that, if you want to expand upon that.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, that's exactly right. The resolution not only asks for documents, but it indicates that the American public now own, as Mr. AUSTRIA has indicated, 80 percent of AIG. And quite frankly, I will say something bad about the Republican administration. I thought President Bush and his Secretary of the Treasury were wrong in asking for this $700 billion. The mantra was that these institutions are too big to fail. Well, most Americans now recognize that they are too big period. And as a result, they should be broken into pieces, going back to Teddy Roosevelt and the trustbusters. Let's break these things apart.

So we do have legislation to divide this thing up. And I hope that it is favorably considered. And as you mentioned, about 60 percent of the American public think that is a good idea.

Mr. TIBERI. I know that you're pushing that legislation. You have many cosponsors. But some think we are too busy to deal with that important legislation. I think you have a chart that demonstrates maybe we are not.

Mr. LATOURETTE. We are not. And I do want to—well, let's do that now, and then we will come back to seeing if we can move along in the game of Clue. And maybe if the gentleman will help me.

Mr. TIBERI. The gentleman from Ohio has a chart that just shows an amazing——

Mr. LATOURETTE. And you could sort of be my Carol Marol. I would appreciate that.

Last year we used the chart that Mr. TIBERI is going to give me a hand with. And people may remember back home that gasoline prices started high and they ended up even higher. And for the entire month of August, we spent time on the floor arguing that perhaps we should have an energy policy in this country that considered everything, renewable energy, solar, wind, geothermal, nuclear in the mix, together with additional exploration for fossil fuels which we are going to need in the near term at least. But we were told we were too busy. We were very, very busy here in the United States Congress. And so we didn't have a chance to get things going.

As, Mr. Speaker, you will remember, the Republicans did such a bang-up job in the majority that they threw us out in the 2006 elections and installed the Democratic majority. And we are honored to have Speaker PELOSI being the first woman to serve in that position since the beginning of the country. So when Ms. PELOSI and her colleagues became the majority party, gas was about $2.22, and the most important piece of legislation that folks thought we could discuss here on the floor was congratulating the University of California-Santa Barbara soccer team for winning something. Now I like soccer. And I'm sure that everybody's parents of that team are proud. And gas was only $2.22. So, okay, let's congratulate people.

Then gas went up to $2.84, and the most important thing that we had to do on the floor that day was to declare it—that was about September 6—declare it National Passport Month. And I began getting calls, I'm sure you guys got calls from people saying, Hey, it's really costing a lot of money to fill up my tank. Well, gas went up to $3.03, and on that day, the new majority determined that the most important thing we could do was commend the Houston Dynamo soccer team for I suppose winning something as well. And we are told that as elected officials you really have to get the soccer moms. And I guess this was an attempt to really make sure we had the soccer moms squared away, because we passed two pieces of legislation dealing with soccer.

Then gas went to $3.77. And so clearly, we are going to talk about gas prices now, right? No. We declared it National Train Day was what we did then. And then gas goes up a little more to $3.84. And what did we do that day? Oh, we passed the Great Cats and Rare Canids Act. And I didn't know—talk about reading things, I know what a cat is. I didn't know what a canid is. It is a dog. And so we celebrated Dog and Cat Day when gas is $3.84.

It goes up to $4.09, and the most important thing to do is to declare the International Year of Sanitation. That's what we did around here. Then the price of gas goes up to $4.14. My phones are ringing off the hook. So clearly, we are going to talk about gas prices then. No, we passed the Monkey Safety Act here in the United States Congress. So you would think that maybe people would be chastened by that when we are no longer talking about gas prices. And sadly I hope we don't go the way that we did in the 1970s. Now that gas is down to about $1.89, I hope we don't forget about when it was $4 a gallon and make those serious investments in renewables and get us off of carbon-based fuel and make us not dependent on countries around the world that don't like us.

Well, this year, as everybody knows that isn't living under a rock, we have a little bit of an economic crisis going on. And you would think that we would attempt to deal with that in a constructive way. On January 6 of this year, which was the first day of the 111th Congress, that is the opening day of this Congress, the stock market, the Dow Jones industrial, was at 9,015 points.

We get to January 20, and that is the day, of course, our new President, Barack Obama, became the 44th President of the United States. It was a very exciting day. All of us were pretty happy about it. But the stock market took a little dip. Now that is not President Obama's fault, because he was just getting sworn in that day. But the Congress, however, had a responsibility because we had already been in almost 1 month now by the time you get to February 2. The stock market goes down to 7,936, and the most important thing we can do on the House floor is to pass a resolution supporting the Goals and Ideals of National Teen Dating. That was a pretty important issue back in Ohio. I'm glad we took care of it.

The stock market dips a little bit further, and on that day, I guess because it didn't go down quite 100 points, and so we commended Sam Bradford for winning the Heisman trophy. Now, I'm sure that Mr. Bradford's family is proud of him. I'm proud of him. And anybody that wins the Heisman trophy is deserving of our congratulations. But when the stock market is in the tank and people are losing their 401(k)s, I don't know if that is the most important thing, but now it takes a precipitous dip down to 7,114, and, oh, son of a gun, 2 years in a row, we passed the Monkey Safety Act. And I don't want to make light of it this time because there was a horrible situation in Connecticut where a woman was attacked by a chimpanzee and suffered horrible injuries. And so clearly our thoughts and prayers with her, and that is a terrible event. However when the stock market is down to 7,114 and people have lost their life savings, clearly, the Monkey Safety Act was not the thing that was foremost on the mind of my constituents.

Actually, the interesting thing to show you how busy we were on that date of February 23, and it had only been 8 days before that the chimpanzee attacked the woman, and so we, as the greatest legislative body in the world, rushed in 8 days to pass the Monkey Safety Act. Then it went down a little bit further, and we, you know, like the soccer moms, we like animals, and so we passed the Shark Conservation Act on that particular day, not dealing with the economic crisis.

Then we sort of roll out to March 9. And this probably was my favorite resolution. We supported pi. And when I read the schedule that morning, I like pie, just look at me. And I thought what kind of ''pie'' is it going to be? Well, it is not p-i-e, it is p-i, which you know, Mr. Speaker, is 3.1416. And apparently we felt that when the stock market had lost 3,000 points in value in 2 months, rather than helping our constituents deal with that and using the full might of the United States Congress to get to the bottom of that, we recognized pi here in the United States Congress.

So I don't think—and this has been sort of tongue in cheek, but I don't think we are too busy.

Mr. AUSTRIA. And I appreciate you pointing this out, because while all this is happening, the three of us represent the State of Ohio, there are real families out there that are hurting right now that we are asking to make sacrifices.

□ 2000

There are over 900,000 businesses in the State of Ohio, and small businesses that make up 70 percent of our workforce out there across this country that are struggling to make payroll, they can't get financing. They can't get debt. And instead of dealing directly with their problem, I mean, you laid out what has been happening here in Congress. But in addition to that, we passed the $700 billion TARP bailout with no accountability, in my opinion, not enough transparency. There was no specific plan by the Department of the Treasury. Then we passed the stimulus bill which contains the language that allows the bonuses to be paid out that you pointed out earlier; not an opportunity for any Member of this Congress to read that bill before we vote on it and pass it.

And then, you know, our constituents back home, hardworking Americans across this country are getting their quarterly statements and they are seeing their account values down. They are struggling to make it right now. And they turn on the television and they see that these executives from AIG are getting $100 million of bonuses of the $170 billion bailout that we gave to them of hard working taxpayers' dollar. These are the same officials that, you know, and were probably involved in a lot of these risky investments that brought AIG down to begin with.

And so what does the House do? We then rush a bill through to try to regain some of that money for our mistakes by trying to pass a 90 percent tax on this money to try to get it back, 90 percent of it back.

And I am reading from The Hill today, seeing where the headline on the front page here is ''House Bonus Bill Is Buried By the Senate.'' That despite the public outcry, despite the reaction that the House had in trying to get that money back, which I don't think we ever should have been in that position to begin with, that bill appears to be not moving in the Senate right now.

I yield back.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the gentleman for his observations. And if the gentleman would go to the jump on Page 8, you will find a quote from the President of the United States, President Obama that I think sort of echoes at least my sentiments. And he said we shouldn't use the tax code to punish people and that is why he is not in favor of this bill, which is why that bill was a piece of political theater to give cover to people who are embarrassed because, by voting ''aye'' on the economic recovery package, they specifically authorized, with the amendment that is on the chart that we were talking about before—thank you Mr. TIBERI—that specifically authorized this paragraph, these 50 words. And when you voted for the economic recovery bill, you voted to give the people at AIG and everywhere else the bonuses. And then, you know, because nobody read it, we are shocked. And so now we are going to use the Tax Code to punish people.

But you know, the President has said that is wrong, and apparently the Senate majority leader has said it is wrong.

Before we go back to our exercise in Clue, however, as we want to narrow this thing down if we can, because we are going to come back every week until somebody has the—I promised my wife I would be really tactful this evening and not use words that people find offensive. So somebody has the courage to stand up and say I did it and here is why I did it and sort of, you know, be a grown up about it.

But you were here, you have been here now to four or five terms, Mr. TIBERI, and I am going to yield to you. I mean, is it your experience as a Member that we are just so busy that we don't have time to deal with gas prices?

Mr. TIBERI. I think the gentleman is right on target here. And as stocks tank, let me tell you, it impacts everybody. It impacts those police officers that protect our streets, firefighters, who are working in a courageous line of work, teachers in Ohio, as you know, who are part of a state teachers retirement system. As someone whose dad lost his pension and health care and job in high school, when someone sees their pension related to the stock market tank, sees their moms and dads seeing their children's college funds absolutely go into the ground, this is important. It impacts every single family out there as this market has tanked. And what are we doing? We are debating the Shark Conservation Act. In fact, the last several weeks, to your point, we have debated noncontroversial issues that have passed nearly unanimously, and not taken up the hard stuff like your resolution that could come to the floor.

In fact, let me just add one thing. Today the leader, JOHN BOEHNER, put together a working group with respect to savings, and I was part of that group. And we unveiled a blueprint that will help American families and American savers. And unfortunately, based upon past history, that piece of legislation will not see the light of day. And it is not like we are spending a lot of time around here passing substantive pieces of legislation. And when we do, we don't get to read it.

And what else was in that stimulus bill that was as controversial as this? We don't know. That may be another exercise for us to find out what other controversial measures, in addition to the game of Clue, I think we know it was the Speaker's Office, based on press reports, but maybe it was the Senate leader's office. Maybe it was on the other side of the Capitol.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Taking back my time. I want to get back to that, but before I do, the gentleman's point is right on the money. In the last 2½ years, the American public can rest assured that they will not go into a post office in this country that doesn't have a name on it because we spend a lot of our time naming Post Offices. But what they can't rest assured is who put those 50 words in the economic recovery bill that authorized the payments of bonuses to these AIG officials; and now they are horrified, shocked and everything else.

And just before we leave this, so that the three of us don't get a lot of e-mails and hate mail from animal lovers, all three of us want sharks to be conserved, and all three of us think that we should have safe monkeys in this country. But we don't, none of us think that it is the most important issue facing the country last year or this year.

Now, back to the Clue, and I think that Mr. TIBERI makes a pretty good point because we do have—when you play Clue you try to collect clues. And there have been some clues recently. And I want to refer to one. On Anderson Cooper, a show on CNN, Dana Bash, who some of us see as a reporter that covers politics here in Washington, I have a transcript of her reporting on the night that this happened, that the crime happened. And I will submit it for the RECORD, Madam Speaker.

And Dana Bash says, ''well, Anderson, as we speak, the White House Chief of Staff, Mr. Emanuel, and the President's Budget Director are inside Nancy Pelosi's office.''

Mr. TIBERI. Not to interrupt, but should we add the Budget Director to the chart?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well next time we come back we are going to put the Budget Director because he is up there too. And then she goes on to report, and, in fact, they have been coming up on 8 hours straight. Eight hours straight shuttling between the House Speaker's Office, and that is why we can't get quite to the Speaker's office yet because of this reporting. But maybe we will get there a little bit later. Shuttling between the Speaker's office and the Senate majority leader, HARRY REID's office urgently trying, attempting to broker a compromise between House Democrats and Senate Democrats. And you know what is interesting about that sentence is I didn't hear the word Republican in there. So this was Democrats negotiating with Democrats negotiating with Democrats. And we now know that we had the President's Budget Director was here for 8 hours shuttling back and forth, a little shuttle diplomacy, together with the President's Chief of Staff, Mr. Emanuel, who was also there. So I think we are getting closer.

And if it is all right with you gentlemen, I would like to exclude Mr. OBEY because I don't think his fingerprints are on this. And Mr. RANGEL, I do have an observation from Mr. RANGEL, who indicated that, Mr. RANGEL, in this same report, and actually this was in the Congressional Quarterly, House and Senate Democratic negotiators met in the Speaker's Office—and we are really getting close to the Speaker's Office here, Madam Speaker—with the White House Chief of Staff, Emanuel and White House Budget Director Peter Orzag into the evening Tuesday, breaking at 9 p.m. and then Chairman RANGEL is quoted in this reporting, ''it is so difficult to talk with a body that is controlled by three people. You have no idea.''

So I think that the distinguished chairman of the Ways and Means Committee is expressing frustration that three people, basically, figured out how to spend $792 billion in an economic recovery package and okayed these 50 words that authorized the payment of bonuses to AIG and other people similarly situated. So I think we are getting a little closer.

Mr. TIBERI. I think what he is saying is three Members of the Senate. We have two Members of the Senate on the Clue board, so I keep, you know, I keep wanting to take names off, but maybe we should add another picture there. We have got to figure out who the other Senator was that he is speaking about.

I do think we can take off the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. RANGEL. I feel pretty confident he wasn't the one.

I think we can take the chairman of the Appropriations Committee off. But I am thinking we need to add a couple too.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, I do too. And let me just get to that for a second. And there was another article that appeared on March 19, and the headline is that the ''White House Staff Botched It''. And this was, appeared in something called the Huffington Post, which is clearly not a conservative Republican organization. But I would submit this for the RECORD as well.

It quotes an AIG executive, well, the article says according to AIG, the payments were okayed by the White House last Thursday. Why? Because it appears that David Axelrod, now we have got to add somebody else, senior policy advisor to the Obama administration and Rahm Emanuel grossly underestimated how infuriating this would be.

The quote from the AIG executive is this: ''We were not authorized until Thursday night,'' that, is to give out these millions of dollars in bonuses. ''We were negotiating with the Treasury and the Federal Reserve. Treasury indicated that they needed it cleared by The White House as well. We hit the go for the payments on Friday,'' after they got the clearance from the White House.

Mr. TIBERI. I think again it is important to note, interrupting, and I apologize for interrupting, what Mr. AUSTRIA said earlier in which Americans are beginning to find out and are very troubled with, is that the American people own 80 percent of AIG. So somebody had to approve it with the Federal Government, and maybe that is the smoking gun.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Maybe. Well, the smoking pen. We have got the pen.

Mr. AUSTRIA. Point of clarification. I assume the pen has been eliminated, right?

Mr. LATOURETTE. We know it is the pen.

Mr. AUSTRIA. Well, somebody had to put that in there and write it in there. Somebody had to use the pen.

But no, I appreciate the point that the gentleman from Columbus made. Or is Columbus correct?

Mr. LATOURETTE. New Albany, I think.

Mr. AUSTRIA. I wanted to make sure I got that right for Central Ohio. But I think that is a very important point.

When the government owns 80 percent of a company and not knowing what is going on and we can't get an answer as to who put this language in. I mean, I appreciate the gentleman from Ohio with this game of Clue because I think that it is as good as any

other methodology that I know of trying to figure out who is responsible for putting that language in because we are not getting the clear answers. We are not getting a specific answer to that question.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the gentleman. And I think we are making some progress because we have a weapon, it was the pen. We are getting down in the suspect list. And I am comfortable, if you gentlemen are comfortable saying that this crime was committed either in the Speaker's Office or in the Senate leaders office because all of the—

Mr. TIBERI. Or the conference room.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, the conference room was where the conferees met. Well, I'd say the conference room too. I think we know it didn't happen in the Appropriations Committee or the Ways and Means Committee. The Banking Committee is still out there. And the reason that the Senate Banking Committee is still out there is that the person that really came under the harshest scrutiny at the beginning was the Senator from Connecticut, Senator DODD. And I would just suggest, Madam Speaker, that he has a vested interest in finding this out just like we do, because when you don't know who did it, when you won't help us find out who did it and have people come clean, people begin to circulate ugly rumors. And I have heard, for instance, that the distinguished chairman of the Senate Banking Committee is one of the largest recipients of campaign contributions from AIG. Now people will say, oh, well, he must have done it because he got campaign cash. Well, I think that is unfair to the Senator, quite frankly, and I think that he should join with us and let's find out who did it.

Today, and Madam Speaker, I will submit an additional document from the Hartford Courant, if I may, into the RECORD. And today, this article starts with ''No wonder Senator Dodd went wobbly last week when asked about his February amendment ratifying hundreds of millions of dollars in bonuses to executives at AIG. Dodd has been one of the company's favorite recipients,'' so an ugly rumor is out there. But it turns out that Senator DODD's wife also benefited, in that she was employed by an AIG subsidiary.

□ 2015

So, look. I don't know who did it, and I hope that the Senator from Connecticut didn't do it, but now people are throwing mud at him and are basically saying, you know, to the average Joe Sixpack at home, well, of course he did it. You know, he got a bunch of cash from him, and his wife used to work for one of their companies, so of course he did it. So the Senator should come out and identify—somebody knows who did it. That's the problem. So just tell us. Move on. They screwed up. Move on.

Madam Speaker, I'll ask how much time we have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I thank the Speaker.

Mr. TIBERI. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LATOURETTE. I'm happy to yield.

Mr. TIBERI. Clearly, to your point in this exercise, most would point the finger at the Senator from Connecticut—

Mr. LATOURETTE. Right.

Mr. TIBERI.—which probably means he didn't do it, which probably means it's somebody else, because he is the most obvious choice having played the game.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, taking back my time, I am a big fan of Agatha Christie's, and as you read through those books, you're sure it's the butler or somebody else, and it's never the butler. So, you know, I don't think we can exclude the Senator, but I'm with you. I think, you know, when everybody is shooting at the Senator from Connecticut, it's probably somebody else.

Mr. TIBERI. Well, yielding back to me again—and I appreciate that—I think what we found in his comments last week in that impromptu press conference is that, one day, he said he didn't know anything about it, and the next day, he said, ''Well, yes, I did do it, but it was at the direction of somebody in the administration.'' Obviously, he doesn't want to throw somebody under the bus, but he has already been thrown under the bus, so I would hope that we could end this rather quickly with: Who is it?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Right.

In just taking back my time, what troubles me about this is, the last time I checked, the Constitution does not let anybody in the administration write a law. So somebody could have suggested it at Treasury, said the President wants it, the Secretary wants it, whatever the facts are, but the fact of the matter is that nobody at Treasury can write legislation. That is the job of the United States Senate and of the United States Congress.

Mr. TIBERI. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LATOURETTE. Oh, I'm happy to.

Mr. TIBERI. To your point, I would like to submit this for the RECORD as well. It's a Los Angeles Times article from February.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Feb. 14, 2009]

PRIVATE TALKS FOR PUBLIC STIMULUS; OBAMA HAS SAID HE WANTS CONGRESS TO WORK IN THE OPEN. BUT HE ISN'T TROUBLED BY THE RECENT NEGOTIATIONS

(By Peter Nicholas)

WASHINGTON.—Upending Washington's entrenched ways of doing business is proving tougher than President Obama may have assumed.

The nearly $800-billion stimulus bill served as a test case.

During the campaign, Obama released a position paper stating his commitment to open government. As president, he said, he would not only insist on transparency in his own administration, he would press Congress to revamp its practices as well.

Obama has no constitutional authority to set rules for Congress, but he suggested he would use his influence to see to it that Congress doesn't conduct its work ''in the dead of night and behind closed doors.''

In the first major piece of legislation pushed by Obama, transparency was missing.

Important negotiating sessions devoted to the stimulus took place in congressional offices, outside pubic view. Rep. Henry A. Waxman (D–Beverly Hills) said he was in a meeting about the stimulus plan Tuesday night in the office of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D–San Francisco). Among the participants was White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel.

''We had to do some hard bargaining,'' Waxman said.

The abundance of private deliberations made for some comical moments.

Rep. Dave Camp (R–Mich.) was walking through the Capitol on Wednesday on his way to a public meeting in which Senators and House members were supposed to hash out differences over the stimulus. As he passed the Rotunda, Camp spotted Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D–Nev.) holding a news conference announcing that a deal had already been struck.

''This is the largest spending bill in the history of the United States, and I believe the public business should be done in public,'' said Camp, who had been appointed to the 10-member conference committee created to reconcile differences between the two chambers.

''President Obama made that commitment repeatedly in his campaign,'' he said.

Obama aides say that the president is still committed to transparency in government.

He reiterated the pledge during the transition, posting a promise on his website to ''restore the American people's trust in their government by making government more open and transparent,'' and cited closed conference committee sessions as a practice ripe for overhaul.

But the White House isn't apologizing for how the stimulus bill was handled. Given the dismal economic climate, White House aides said, the country needed a stimulus bill—fast.

Press Secretary Robert Gibbs, asked abut the private negotiations, said that Obama wasn't troubled.

''He's pleased with the process and the product that has come out,'' Gibbs said while briefing reporters Friday. ''I think when the process is done, the American people will be proud of the product that we believe and we hope will begin to stimulate the economy.''

Democratic leaders said the bill was handled according to procedures and customs that have been in place for years, including when Republicans controlled Congress.

Waxman said Congress' treatment of the bill was fairly standard. Could Congress have demanded that all negotiations play out in public? Waxman said that would have been impractical.

''There are too many moving parts in this bill,'' Waxman said. ''We would be sitting in an open conference committee meeting for weeks, if not a whole month, to process all the amendments that would have been offered.''

Again to your point, this says the President has no constitutional authority to set rules for Congress, ''but he suggested he would use his influence to see to it that Congress doesn't conduct its work 'in the dead of night and behind closed doors,' '' when in fact, in this particular exercise, as we know and as your chart indicates and as the Senator from Connecticut has indicated, these words came from the administration and were put into the

stimulus bill in the dead of night. We still don't know who in the administration. We don't know everybody who was in the room from the administration, so the administration can claim they have nothing to do with Congress.

Based upon the documents from the press that we have submitted tonight and that you have submitted tonight and based upon the shuttle diplomacy that occurred during the days before the stimulus vote, there were top administration officials involved, in the room, writing the bill in the dead of night, with no transparency, no Republicans, no press, no C–SPAN, with nobody witnessing what was being done. The product you have at the end of the process are these 50 words that nobody in America is taking credit for. Your resolution tomorrow will begin to get to the bottom of this, unfortunately, if someone does not come forward.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, taking back my time, I do hope that in the markup of the resolution of inquiry tomorrow that we do see transparency and bipartisanship. Both Republicans and Democrats on that committee want to answer the question as much as we do and as much as, I'm sure, Senator DODD would like to have this cloud lifted from his shoulders, and so I hope it moves in that direction.

I have to tell you I am not optimistic. I mean I will not be surprised when I get a telephone call tomorrow that the Financial Services Committee has somehow made it impossible for that to see the light of day, which it can by a majority vote—they have the votes—and we'll see what happens. But you know what? I'm a big fan of Chairman FRANK's, and he is a fair man, and I think he'll give it fair consideration tomorrow. I look forward to that telephone call.

Mr. AUSTRIA, is there anything you want to say before we leave here?

Mr. AUSTRIA. If you would yield for just a moment.

Mr. LATOURETTE. I would be happy to.

Mr. AUSTRIA. Let me just say, as a new Member up here from Ohio—I mean I served 10 years in the State legislature. I've been here less than 100 days. I'm just starting my third month. I have never seen this kind of process where bills are rolled out, where language is stuck in that we don't have the opportunity to read before we vote on it, and where language is put in and no one will take responsibility for that language.

I think the American people out there are looking at this, scratching their heads, saying: How can this be? How can it be that language is put in a bill, and nobody has an opportunity to read that bill, and nobody wants to take responsibility now for that language?

I appreciate the exercise that the gentleman from Ohio has gone through tonight to make the point, and I appreciate your offering that resolution. It shouldn't take 14 Republican freshmen to stand up and say, ''we want accountability for this dollar,'' and offer legislation that we would hope that the administration would stand behind, but it doesn't seem to be getting any traction. I hope your resolution moves tomorrow because, you know, the American people deserve answers. I think you've made some very good points tonight, and I appreciate the opportunity to participate with both gentlemen from Ohio.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, listen. I thank you.

Mr. TIBERI, would you like to close?

Mr. TIBERI. Let me just, again, thank you for your leadership on this. I would hope that we don't have to come back next week and add pictures and subtract rooms, but I am willing to do that if nothing occurs tomorrow. I certainly would not want to be in the majority—a Democrat in a competitive district—having to defend a ''no'' vote on your resolution tomorrow and a ''yes'' vote on a bill that allowed these 47 words to go forward and millions and millions of dollars to citizens and noncitizens of a failing company that should go into bankruptcy or should be split up into several different companies. This is an outrage. Americans are outraged. We will get to the bottom of this, and at the end of the day, I predict that we will find out who was responsible for that pen.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Well, I thank both gentlemen for participating.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for your courtesy.

To reinforce Mr. TIBERI's point, I think Senator DODD has a vested interest in helping us with this because, currently, it looks like ''Senator DODD in the conference room with a pen.'' Now, I don't think that that is true, so I hope that whoever did this will tell us about it.

Dana, what is happening?

Dana Bash, CNN Senior Congressional Correspondent: Well, Anderson, as we speak, the White House chief of staff and the president's budget director are inside House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office.

And, in fact, they have been here coming up on eight hours straight—eight hours straight—shuttling between the House speaker's office and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's office, trying to urgently broker a compromise between House Democrats and Senate Democrats in order to get the president's stimulus package to—to his desk by this week.

And I just spoke to a Democratic source who says that, in these talks, they are narrowing their differences.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

Bash (voice-over): House Democrats are not happy that Senate Democrats cut some $100 billion in spending from their stimulus package, tens of billions slashed from Democratic priorities, like education.

But House Speaker Nancy Pelosi is now signaling, they will likely have to live with it.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D–CA), Speaker of the House: As President Obama cautioned the nation, that we cannot allow the perfect to be the enemy of the effective and of the necessary. And we will not.

CQ—

Late into the Evening * House and Senate Democratic negotiators met in the Speaker's office with White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emmanuel and White House budget chief Peter Orzsag late into the evening Tuesday, breaking at 9 p.m., working intensely to firm up an overall cap for the package and sort through differences.

''It's so difficult to talk with a body that is . . . controlled by three people. You have no idea,'' Ways and Means Committee Charles B. Rangel, D–N.Y., said as he left the meeting, noting that the health and spending portions of the bill were proving most difficult to reconcile.

''There's no obstacle that's come up that we cannot resolve with a lot of pain,'' he said.

As Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus, D–Mont., left the meeting, he said that $800 billion was the ''ballpark'' limit for the conference report, and that the final figure might come in a little lower than that. Baucus said that getting a deal by the weekend was the goal understood by everyone involved.

[From www.theleftcoaster.com, Mar. 19, 2009]

WHITE HOUSE STAFF BOTCHED IT

Folks, Geithner, Bernanke, and the Bush Treasury Department knew about the AIG bonuses for months. According to AIG, the payments were OK'd by the White House last Thursday. Why? Because it appears that David Axelrod and Rahm Emanuel grossly underestimated how infuriating this would be.

''We weren't authorized until Thursday night,'' the AIG executive said. ''We were negotiating with the Treasury and the Federal Reserve. Treasury indicated that they needed it cleared by the White House, as well. We hit the go button for the payments on Friday.''

For the new administration, the bonuses were a distraction from what senior aides called the main focus: getting the economy working and people back to work. ''People are not sitting around their kitchen tables thinking about AIG,'' Axelrod said. ''They are thinking about their own jobs.''

Bad decision Dave.

Their message to the president when the group assembled for their first extended conversation about AIG in the Roosevelt Room on Sunday was not optimistic: They told him they had ''done and will do what we legally can,'' Axelrod said.

But Obama made clear at that meeting that he was unwilling to throw up his hands. He instructed Geithner and the others to seek legal ways that the government might recover the bonuses. And he made plans to tell the public what he thought the next day.

That decision ran counter to the belief among some in his inner circle that the bonus issue while an outrage was a small problem compared with the economic issues confronting his young presidency. ''The first and most important job we have is to get this economy moving again,'' Axelrod said. ''As galling as this is, it doesn't go to the main issue.''

What you see is a fine example of poor decision making clouded by being inside the White House bubble. After spending two years out on the campaign trail ensuring that your message and actions mesh with what people are thinking, Axelrod is now inside the bubble and cannot see that the optics of this fiasco do matter to people, because he assumes naively that people will look beyond it due to an overriding fear of their own situations. He also assumes his boss can talk his way out of anything, when in fact Obama has surrounded himself with two tone deaf lops in Geithner and Summers.

DODD'S WIFE A FORMER DIRECTOR OF BERMUDA-BASED IPC HOLDINGS, AN AIG CONTROLLED COMPANY

(By Kevin Rennie)

No wonder Senator Christopher Dodd (D–Conn) went wobbly last week when asked about his February amendment ratifying hundreds of millions of dollars in bonuses to executives at insurance giant AIG. Dodd has been one of the company's favorite recipients of campaign contributions. But it turns out that Senator Dodd's wife has also benefited from past connections to AIG as well.

From 2001–2004, Jackie Clegg Dodd served as an ''outside'' director of IPC Holdings, Ltd., a Bermuda-based company controlled by AIG. IPC, which provides property casualty catastrophe insurance coverage, was formed in 1993 and currently has a market cap of $1.4 billion and trades on the NASDAQ under the ticker symbol IPCR. In 2001, in addition to a public offering 15 million shares of stock that raised $380 million, IPC raised more than $109 million through a simultaneous private placement sale of 5.6 million shares of stock to AIG—giving AIG a 20 percent stake in IPC. (AIG sold its

Clegg was compensated for her duties to the company, which was managed by a subsidiary of AIG. In 2003, according to a proxy statement, Clegg received $12,000 per year and an additional $1,000 for each Directors' and committee meeting she attended. Clegg served on the Audit and Investment committees during her final year on the board.

IPC paid millions each year to other AIG-related companies for administrative and other services. Clegg was a diligent director. In 2003, the proxy statement report, she attended more than 75 percent of board and committee meetings. This while she served as the managing partner of Clegg International Consultants, LLC, which she created in 2001, the year she joined the board of IPC. (See Dodd's public financial disclosure reports with the Senate from 2001–2004 here.)

Dodd is likely more familiar with the complicated workings of AIG than he was letting on last week. This week may provide him with another opportunity to refresh his recollections.

THE PRESIDENT'S CHALLENGE TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. DAHLKEMPER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to address the House this evening because tomorrow is going to be a very important day as we move forward with a markup in the Budget Committee to deal with priorities that are going to be facing this Congress.

Before I begin my presentation, I would like to recognize the gentlewoman from Houston, Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), if I could yield to her for a 3-minute presentation. I know she has some information that she would like to share with the House, and I would recognize her at this time.

DR. DOROTHY HEIGHT'S 97TH BIRTHDAY

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Allow me to thank the distinguished gentleman from Oregon and to emphasize the point that he just made of the importance of the budget markup and also of the very important issues that he comes to the floor to discuss this evening.

There is another important event that occurred today, and that was the 97th birthday of Dr. Dorothy Height. I don't think I have to remind my colleagues of how important a person Dr. Height is today and how important she has been over the years. She is now the chairman and president of the National Council of Negro Women, but she was the only woman present at the 1963 March on Washington. She has previously been an icon, working with Presidents as far back as Franklin Delano Roosevelt. A civil rights leader she is, but an empowerment of women is her calling. She has led the National Council of Negro Women now for decades.

Today, at that very building—really, at the only building owned by African Americans on Pennsylvania Avenue, women gathered from around the Nation to celebrate Dr. Height's birthday.

Dr. Height was a pillar in the civil rights movement, standing alongside of A. Philip Randolph and Martin Luther King and numbers of others. She has also been someone to encourage women to participate in the governmental process, to be educated, to stand strong. She is a spokesperson for the unempowered, and of course, she is a mentor to so many of us. She is a friend of the Congressional Black Caucus, of the NAACP and of the National Urban League. When there is an issue of concern, you have the need to call Dr. Height. She is also a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal along with many, many other awards.

I am privileged today to be able to stand on the floor of the House to recognize an American icon, a patriot, a woman of valor and courage.

Madam Speaker, it is again my great pleasure to salute Dr. Dorothy Height for a happy, happy birthday, now some 97 years old, and to thank my friend and colleague for allowing us to share this with all of our colleagues and to celebrate, again, a life that has been worth living and is still worth living—a champion of the people.

Dr. Dorothy Height, happy birthday.

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you. I appreciate the gentlelady making that presentation.

Madam Speaker, the President of the United States has issued a challenge to this Congress and to the American people that is embodied in the budget that he outlined before us when he addressed this Chamber in his first joint session of Congress and has followed up with in his budget submission. He has given a challenge to us to deal with the great interrelated problems of the day.

He has suggested that we move forward to deal with health care in terms of fundamental reform for all Americans, for dealing with energy instability and global warming, to deal with the incredible budget deficit that he has inherited to try and stabilize the fiscal situation of the United States, and to deal with investing in education in the future.

What I would like to do this evening is address the element of the budget that speaks to climate change, global warming, energy independence, and investing in our energy future.

It has been interesting listening to our Republican friends who have been told by Mr. BOEHNER, the Republican leader, that they are not to be legislators, that they are to be communicators, evidently deciding that dealing with the messy problems of government with energy, with the budget, with the nuts and bolts that the American people sent us here to address might be a little too risky. So, instead, they're talking about communicating some of their concerns.

We have heard the mantra about the President's budget—taxing too much, spending too much and borrowing too much. We have not heard constructive alternatives, and they certainly have not acknowledged that the policies of the Republican majority and the Republican President, when they were in charge for the last 8 years with the Bush administration and in charge for a dozen years in the House of Representatives, actually created these problems.

Spend too much? These are people who understand spending. They produced record budget increases, increasing spending faster than Bill Clinton, faster even than one of the favorite whipping boys they have—the Great Society of Lyndon Johnson.

Borrow too much? Well, these are people who, when President Bush took office, were faced with the daunting prospect of a $5 trillion budget surplus. That was the official estimate. Remember, there were smart people concerned with what would happen if we paid off the national debt. What would be the instruments for insurance and pensions and other commercial transactions? Well, they solved that problem by turning a $5 trillion surplus, with a pattern of reckless spending and ill-considered tax cuts, to a record deficit. It was a $5 trillion surplus, and they added $5 trillion to the national debt. They have given President Obama a record $1.8 trillion deficit that he is struggling with now.

They know about spending too much. They know about borrowing too much because much of this was money borrowed from the Chinese, the Japanese and the Europeans. Under their watch, the current accounts and the balance of all of the goods and services and trade in and out of the United States increased from 3.6 percent to over 5 percent, a 40 percent increase—rather sobering—and it is contributing to the instability that we face.

Well, these people are, hopefully, going to stop communicating long enough tomorrow to maybe roll up their sleeves and help us deal with very specific opportunities as part of the

President's challenge dealing with climate change, carbon pollution and the opportunity for energy independence.

□ 2030

This is critical for the same reasons that the Republican talking points are circulated because the situation today—with our carbon pollution, energy instability, climate change—is a tax on the future.

Last year, we shipped some $700 billion overseas to pay for imported oil, a sum that was taken away from our economy, much of it borrowed money. It is, in the future, it is a recipe for disaster as we move forward. They know that as we are in a situation today where we're talking about disasters that are consequences of this climate instability—we have seen a dramatic increase in weather-related events in terms of drought just in terms of natural disaster. We saw last year $200 billion of costs associated with natural disasters, much of which is related to this climate instability, unpredictable weather events, and 220,000 lives were lost. And, going forward, we know we are facing greater and greater challenges.

The budget that has been advanced by the President that we will be discussing has the opportunity for us to carve out some room for some area that deals with—whether it's cap-and-trade, a carbon tax—some mechanism so that it is no longer free for people to pollute the atmosphere with carbon.

We know that it is not free in terms of environmental consequence. We know that it is not free in terms of weather instability, in terms of drought, the permafrost in Alaska that is no longer perma, roads that are buckling, seaside villages that are washed away, and we watch as sea levels continue to increase in the United States placing millions of Americans at risk who live immediately adjacent to our coastlines and people around the world who are going to be susceptible to storm surges. We're looking at a situation now where these challenges are going to bear directly on the quality of life of Americans and our economic stability.

It is clear that over the last 20 years, these concentrations of gasses that trap heat in the atmosphere, raising the temperature of the planet, the case now is largely settled. The consensus of the environmental community is that we have—global warming is a reality and we have consequences that we must deal with.

It is important that we have an opportunity in this Congress to exercise our responsibility to do something about the costs and consequences of climate change. We are feeling them today, and they are going to be even more devastating on people in the future.

Lake Mead is less than half the level that it has been in recent years, putting tremendous stress on water supplies in the southwest. The City of Las Vegas, for instance, is looking at rather elaborate and expensive alternatives to try and maintain their lifestyle in the middle of the desert.

We're watching increased forest fires year after year. These costs are increasing exponentially placing large areas, not just in the southwest, but the flame zone is stretching across the country.

There is increased damage from forest pests that are moving into new habitat as a result of the climate change.

And then there are the costs that we bear to national security. As we look at conflicts that relate to water and drought in sub-Saharan Africa, in the Middle East, these bear a cost burden on the United States. We very likely have to deal with those conflicts in the future.

There is also a very critical cost that is occurring. As the ocean absorbs increasing amounts of carbon dioxide, the ocean acidifies. We're bleaching the coral reefs—the coral reefs that have been likened to the rain forests of the ocean; that reduces the ability of plankton to form calcium carbonate, reduces the ability of the ocean to absorb carbon and threatens the food chain on which not just aquatic life, but increasingly large numbers of people around the world rely.

There are significant health consequences as we look at the impact of severe heat waves. We watched thousands of people die in the Midwest, in Europe, particularly in France, with heat waves of just a few years ago. We are quite certain, and the research is clear, the models predict, and are, in fact, proving to be the case that as these intensify in magnitude and duration, we're going to have further increases in mortality and morbidity especially amongst the young, the frail, the elderly and the poor.

We're watching impacts on air quality, a tax on Americans now, dealing with regional ozone pollution, respiratory infection, aggravation of asthma and premature death.

These extreme weather events are having, especially along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, severe events that have intensity of precipitation that is increasing the risk of flooding, greater run-off and erosion, and the potential for adverse water quality.

The people who are—increasing numbers of whom are who are subjected to these problems of disease and injury to floods, storms, droughts, and fires, this is a real cost today and is one that is going to increase in the future.

Madam Speaker, there are opportunities for us to be able to make a difference, restructuring our economy, dealing with climate change, reducing carbon pollution, in ways that will make a fundamental difference in terms of how America works. At a time when our economy is in free fall, what better opportunity for us to be able to create economic opportunities at home, new green jobs that can't be exported, building a smart grid, weatherizing homes, new jobs from exporting green technology that we create, and reducing the costs for American families through energy efficiency. Remember, it is not the rate but the bill at the end of the day.

We have an opportunity to increase economic competitiveness with a more efficient economy, and energy independence means we can stop sending our money overseas to people who don't like us.

Now, I see that I have been joined by my colleague from New York. Mr. TONKO has been a leader, both in terms of the private sector position, and for years in the New York Assembly before he joined us in Congress. He chaired relevant legislative committees dealing with these issues.

And we're honored to have him join us this evening, and I would like to recognize him for his observations about the opportunity as we move forward with a new budget, dealing with opportunities to reduce carbon pollution and usher in a new economic era.

Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Congressman BLUMENAUER. And it is with great interest that I join you because I listened to your commentary about the important factors associated with this transformation in our economy.

I think it is so important for us to focus on the fact that as we grow American power, as we grow energy sources that are American produced, we are creating American jobs for the benefit of American working families.

So this is a totally American agenda where we can grow that energy security and advance great opportunities in the workplace as we enhance our environment and provide for sounder energy policy.

You know, I am reminded that over the last 50 years, the major growth, over ½ of the growth of our Nation's GDP, is related to developing and emerging technologies that were then adopted into all sorts of institutional outcomes.

That investment, that growth in our GDP, explained by emerging technologies only required a 3 percent, on average, investment in R&D; 3 percent of our GDP was invested in R&D. So when we think of that research and development opportunity at that mere 3-percent level, and to recognize that that meant well over ½ of our growth in the Nation's GDP, that is a powerful statement. Imagine what happens when we are willing to invest a greater amount into R&D.

I am tremendously encouraged by the Obama administration because of its embracing the important role that science can play, treating science and technology as vibrant components in our comeback as an economy.

We also know that as we look at history, we can understand fully that it was technology and reform and transformation and innovation that produced the success stories here in this country. As we moved from an internal

combustion engine to the development of electricity, we created an unprecedented amount of jobs. As we developed the automobile, it created millions of manufacturing jobs. And certainly millions more were employed by building those power plants and dams and our Nation's electric grid.

So just as we moved into that era of job creation and job enhancement and technology advancements, think of the green-power revolution that can really transform how we address our economy. There can be no strong comeback without our investment in energy. And I think that's what this is about: American jobs producing American power for America's families.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well, I appreciate your sketching that vision of the future with a look towards the past. And if there was ever a time that the American economy needs a little rebalancing, it is now. We're looking at a financial services sector that is going to be shrinking. I think we've seen the consequence where there is a certain amount of this economic growth, which was a result of developing exotic financial products, having desk jockeys figure out new ways to charge fees, and subprime loans, what happened with predatory loan lending, and in some cases, outrageous credit card practices.

Well, this is not arguably adding to the store of national wealth. And what you described was several instances in our history where we were developing and implementing new technology. We were adding value to the economy, real value to the American productivity. The family had more tangible activities. And people were involved with jobs that created value.

Well, we have seen study after study that indicates precisely what you have described is going to occur if we are able to make that transition.

The State of California is already one of the most energy efficient in the Nation. In fact, if the entire United States was as efficient on a per capita basis as California was just a few years ago, energy consumption in the United States would be reduced 32 percent.

Well, one wonders, well, then California may not have the economic upside of dealing with a cost-effective energy reduction. Well, that would be wrong. California has analyzed the economic impact of their plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels in the course of about the next decade.

□ 2045

That's a 30 percent reduction from business as usual emission levels projected for 2020, about 15 percent below today's level, and they found that the economic benefits would increase economic production overall for their State $33 billion. It would increase their gross State product $7 billion. It would increase personal income—and this is critical in terms of the savings to individuals and increased earnings from green jobs—$16 billion. On a per capita basis, Californians would be ahead $200 each per year, and there would be more than 100,000 new jobs. Oh, and by the way, they calculate billions of dollars—between $4 and $5 billion—a year savings in health costs.

So I think what you have described, we can see in a State like California where there's been extensive study, that there's an opportunity to really realize that vision.

Mr. TONKO. Well, having come from NYSERDA—you mentioned my role in the New York State Assembly as energy chair for 15 years, but then I moved over to NYSERDA, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, where I served as president and CEO. I saw firsthand that research and development equaled economic recovery. It provided many, many opportunities to advance science and technology and create jobs from the trades on over to the inventor and innovator, the engineering groups that would design specific new products and then deploy them where they were success stories into the commercial sector.

I think that when we talk about these opportunities we're reminded of a report that came out in 2005 from National Academies and it was entitled, Rising Above the Gathering Storm. And let me just read the three basic categories that they thought were of the most meaningful path that America should follow: investment in basic research; innovation as the path to reducing our dependence on foreign oil; and improving science, technology, engineering, and math education.

Now, right there in a nutshell is a major impetus to a new era of job creation. We can bring about a much more vibrant outcome for the manufacturing sector simply by retrofitting new energy innovation to that workplace, providing for, if not cheaper, smarter outcomes, which then wins at the global marketplace.

I think that our manufacturing sector can grow great potential with an energy revolution, not only in the direct impact of jobs created in that arena, but the ripple effect that then circulates into and impacts into many of our sectors of the economy.

I looked at a project when I was still in the State Assembly to work with our dairy farms in upstate New York. They were impacted by prices that simply were very marginal. They did not give them much of a profit, if one at all, and we needed to, in New York State, look at ways to cut the costs of milk production for our dairy farmers.

I thought, well, they're dealing with a perishable product, they have energy costs that are sometimes difficult to manage because they can't deal with peak and off peak necessarily, with Mother Nature taking hold in their operations. And so we worked on energy retrofits with Cornell University, with NYSERDA, with the local utility, and with the farming community, with farm representatives, the farm bureau.

We came up with programs in a demonstration project that saved somewhere between 30 and 40, if not greater, percent in demand just in that setting of our dairy farm operation. We then moved to some 70 farms from the success of that demonstration, and all were very pleased with the outcome.

And without even adjusting the rate, as you had made mention just earlier, they paid much less for their bill because the demand was reduced significantly, and they're dealing again with a perishable product that has a heating and cooling process, that is a costly one in terms of energy consumption.

So here we created a much stronger outcome, and believe it or not, with that more comfortable setting, that because of some of the fan work that had been done to cool the barn and, again, regulate the energy consumption, you had a more comfortable setting for the herd, and production per cow was greater.

So all around it was a win-win-win situation, and we were utilizing a state-of-the-art, shelf-ready technology. Think of the many other applications that are out there looming that we can then advance through resources that come when we put together a system that checks the pollution impact on our environment and produces through that, resources that grow jobs, grow opportunities, grow discovery, grow innovation, grow demand reduction, and then move forward to creating this all-American agenda that impacts, finally, the American family in very positive measure.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. That's a very impressive story, starting with reducing environmental pressures to right through the food chain, production chain, reducing costs, increasing productivity. And I would assume that it is also safe to say that there is a hidden advantage in the long term because application of strategies like this reduce long-term demand.

Nothing is more costly for individual consumers than having to go and make massive capital investment for future production capacity. The cheapest kilowatt is one that we don't have to generate, and this would be an example where you were saving future generations as well.

Mr. TONKO. And I hear you, Congressman BLUMENAUER. I think that in this country, beyond any other, with consumption per person, energy demand per person so high above the average, there is a greater bit of opportunity here than in any other world Nation that is a manufacturing leader in the world.

So we have with this gluttonous dependency on petroleum-based, fossil fuel-based economy of ours to move forward aggressively, and just a simple 1 or 2 or 5 percent reduction in demand is monumental coast to coast. And so this is about job creation in a way that grows significant jobs from all sectors. From the blue collar and white collar jobs of today, all can be transformed to some degree to a green collar work environment.

Just yesterday in Albany, New York, at the State Education Department, a subcommittee from the Science and Technology Committee of this House, headed by Chairman HINOJOSA, went to Albany to conduct a hearing on improvements in the Workforce Investment Act. The reauthorization is before us as we speak. We're looking at how we can better improve that act and also bring about today's thinking on green collar opportunities, green collar opportunities in the energy world.

And part of the witness table included a representative from GE's wind division. They talked about the Federal Department of Energy's forecast of some 500,000 jobs in that industry that will require those who are site managers, site operational people, to those who are wind technicians to be able to learn the trades, learn the maintenance and retrofitting and installation opportunities and skills to bring about this revolution of sorts. There will be those, too, that are required to come up with the next generation of equipment that is, you know, today in the labs percolating in a way that is just, again, a revolution waiting to happen.

This is smart thinking. This is smart policy. These are progressive measures that then take this country into that world leading status.

You know, as a kid I remember the space race. I remember the Sputnik situation. We were competitive. We were going to beat Russia to the punch. We were going to make certain that we landed a person on the Moon. That came with a vision that was followed up with a sense of policy, that drove us with resource commitment. We have that same opportunity today, a golden opportunity made green in a way that will spark this innovation economy, that will transform a lot of the work opportunities out there and provide the bottom line benefits to American working families.

I think the middle class Americans who have just realized the largest investment in a tax cut in the Nation's history through the recent recovery act will now stand yet another chapter of gain here with this sort of thinking.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I love the phraseology, ''a golden opportunity turned green.'' I think that is well-said, and your analogy to the space race that we had with the former Soviet Union I think is a perfect analogy. It sparked a birth of technology. It encouraged us to invest in education in grade school, high school and college and post-secondary. It was a spurt of innovation that led to a whole host of new products and increased productivity.

And you rightly point out that we are currently the largest consumer of energy in the world on a per capita basis. Sadly, we waste more energy than any other country on the face of the planet. It doesn't have to be that way, and in your State and mine, there are people hard at work developing new technologies and techniques to be able to essentially mine these energy sinks that we have with old residential and industrial buildings, wasteful practices, to be able to harvest the energy, to be able to recycle it, to lower bills and be able to have longer term productivity. This new energy opportunity seems to me to be unparalleled.

I want to just make one additional observation about the fact that change is coming. Now, there are some that say, well, maybe we don't want it in this budget, maybe we are not ready for cap-and-trade or a carbon tax or facing up, as virtually every other developed country has done, and indeed over 900 cities across the country decided they weren't going to wait for the Bush administration. They were going to be Kyoto compliant. They were moving ahead with their own plans, including mine in Portland, Oregon, where we reduced greenhouse gas emissions for four consecutive years and actually are almost Kyoto compliant now.

Well, the Bush administration not only turned its back on its global responsibilities by not only not ratifying Kyoto and working with it, but not offering an alternative, just basically saying we'll go our own way, we'll ignore it. They ignored the problem in this country. The EPA administrator, Johnson, was in the most effective witness protection program in history. I think he appeared before one congressional committee. I only saw him once during his tenure, but they refused, EPA under President Bush and Administrator Johnson, refused to accept their responsibility under the Clean Air Act. You know, the Massachusetts Supreme Court case said don't delay further on dealing with tailpipe emissions, don't deny a decision to the State of California to try and do something about it.

Well, the Obama administration understands that nonaction is not an option and that they are following the law finally and dealing with the potential of regulating carbon emissions under the Clean Air Act.

Well, I think if we took a census of people in the business community, they would rather that Congress stepped up with a regulatory process, whether it's cap-and-trade or carbon tax or some variation, so that they had certainty and that we have a chance to move forward rather than just doing it in a regulatory process administratively.

But one way or another, the head-in-the-sand approach of the prior administration and former congressional leadership that was going to deny the reality of global warming and our responsibility is a thing of the past.

□ 2100

The question is: How are we going to do it and how soon will we move forward so that we can reap the benefits and avoid the consequences?

Mr. TONKO. Absolutely. I think the strategy is one that will be produced in very thoughtful exchange here in the House and in the Senate and working with the administration.

I think the resources you talk about, the garnering of resources, these can be applied in so many measures. I saw from my days in the assembly as Energy Chair, to my time as NYSERDA president, a huge sea change in thinking from even the business community, where they came to NYSERDA looking for opportunities for energy efficiency installments into their operation. They were hard hit by some of these economic pressures.

When we think of it, it was an energy crisis that kind of drove this economic crisis. When gas prices were rising severely, when petroleum prices were rising severely, when the cost of running our factories and the cost of running our workplaces and the cost of maintaining our homes kept rising because of those fuel costs, then people came into an energy crunch. That drove this economic recession that has been so long and deep and now inherited by this administration as we now struggle with the Recovery Act to come forward with a solution.

Doing nothing would have meant what—500,000 to 600,000 job losses per month? So it took action—just like this will take action. As the President has said, energy reform is required for our economic recovery. Health care reform is required for our economic recovery.

So this opportunity for energy reform, where we retrofit our factories and provide for cheaper outcomes and more efficient government, in partnership with our private sector, making certain that we embrace our intellectual capacity, that is what this is all about.

I saw what we could do just in housing stock alone with efficiency measures that range from weatherization to home audits that produce all sorts of insulation requirements and those kinds of investments that, again, produce jobs in our neighborhoods.

I saw what NYSERDA was doing through Hudson Valley Community College, one of the large community colleges in the capital region of New York State. They partnered with NYSERDA. We set goals. We put programs together. We made certain resources were there and then went forward with training people that might be construction management majors at Hudson Valley Community College and learning state-of-the-art PV and solar application for rooftops.

Training the workforce of the future, taking people through various work incentive programs, through our PIC—our Private Industry Council, and making certain they were connected to the community college opportunity, training them at Hudson Valley as educators, then reaching out to other community colleges and creating that network of trainer doing the work with the future trainer. And all of them

then working with unemployed, underemployed, people transition that needed new skills developed that were highly skilled in the workforce, addressing our curricula in pre-K–12, addressing the opportunities for matriculation at our colleges and certification programs. All of this is very important to building the human infrastructure that then goes out there and becomes that green energy team in all of our neighborhoods, all of our States across the Nation, making certain that we spark that kind of job creation and dedication to a cause that has us reducing our demand, that then has us producing something other than a fossil-based economy, and generating situations of power and energy needs that do not pollute and add to our global warming situation and to our carbon footprint. All of that is a spectacular outcome that is achievable with the proper focus, laser-sharp focus, commitment to resources, and advancement in progressive policy.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congressman TONKO, we are fortunate to have your 15 years of committee leadership and your work at NYSERDA to be able to bring to bear in a practical sense how we implement that vision. I could not agree with you more. Frankly, I am excited that the American public understands this.

Now there are those that try and distort what public opinion is, what the public will or will not do. You have given concrete examples in your State of New York of how these pieces fit together. We find that more than 75 percent of the Americans in Gallup's annual environmental poll for this year say they are in favor of increased government financial support and incentives to produce energy from alternative sources, while just 8 percent say that government should do less. Thirteen percent said the government has it right exactly.

The same survey showed that Americans largely endorse government efforts to increase alternative energy production through the use of financial support or incentives directly in line with the stated objectives of this administration.

Now these are majorities of Democrats, 86 percent; Independents, 79 percent; even Republicans, 63 percent, all support these renewable energy investments like you describe.

I was also struck by a second poll of over 2,000 Americans conducted by the Yale Project on Climate Change and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication where they found that the American public strongly supported a wide variety of climate change and energy policies.

Ninety-two percent supported more funding for research on renewable energy sources such as solar and wind; 85 percent supported tax rebates for people buying energy-efficient vehicles or solar panels; 80 percent said the government should regulate carbon dioxide as a pollutant; and 69 percent said the United States should sign an international treaty that requires the United States to cut its emissions of carbon dioxide 90 percent by 2050, not the 80 percent that we deal with.

And we find in the same survey a large majority of Americans also supported policies that directly stated, told the Americans that there would be an economic cost. Seventy-nine percent supported a 45-mile-per-gallon efficiency standard for cars, trucks, and SUVs, even if it meant that a new vehicle would cost $1,000 more to buy. Seventy-two percent supported a requirement that electric utilities produce at least 20 percent of their energy from wind, solar, or renewable sources, even if it cost the household $100 a year or more.

Seventy-two percent supported government subsidies to replace old water heaters, air conditioners, light bulbs, and insulation, even if it cost the average household $5 a month in higher taxes. And 63 percent supported a special fund to make buildings more energy efficient and teach Americans how to reduce their energy use, even if that added an extra $2.50 a month to their electric bills. Finally, 67 percent said the United States should reduce its emissions of greenhouse gasses, regardless of what other countries do.

It seems to me this is pretty compelling evidence that the American public is starting to get it.

Mr. TONKO. Not only that, Congressman BLUMENAUER, I think with that intensity that you just shared with us, it tells me that that should push elected representatives here in the House and Senate to respond to their constituents in a way that is thoughtful and progressive because that is the message I believe is imparted by such polling results.

People know that we have precious little time to correct some of this. But they also know that there's a great outcome. I believe the youngest generations in today's society are going to compel us to think outside the barrel. I think they are going to push us and say it's time to think outside the barrel and do things appropriately.

I will give you an example. Again, at NYSERDA we got involved in a school project across the State at several schools. We would install solar systems at the school to, A, ease the burden on the property taxpayer; B, invest in the children's education so they could see firsthand what was happening and to inspire them; C, to inform the educator to take the teaching staff and allow them to incorporate into their classroom activities the discussion of renewables, of solar, of the opportunities to become independent—energy independent.

What a remarkably successful program. We need just to grow that. But, again, it's resources. States sometimes are confined or restricted. If we have a strong partnership with Federal Government, then we can do that multilayering of government to respond in a way that advances this stretched thinking to allow us again to measure in green terms what the future can be and to see that so many of these opportunities are on that shelf, ready to be applied, tells us that there's a great bit of opportunity out there looming—looming large.

And so I think that polling statistics and the data that are exchanged here tell us that there's a new day coming. As we invest in this coming budget, I believe you're going to see a commitment to a new world where we are that energy-secure Nation. And as we grow our energy security, I'm firmly convinced we grow our national security. Because our involvement, our dependency on the Middle East, for instance, for our supply of oil and petroleum finds us depending on some of the most troubled spots in the world that have unstable governments, that then control our destiny for what is a basic need out there—the energy to light and heat our homes, to power our manufacturing centers, and our workplaces.

When we are dependent in such huge measure on that sort of importation, it only causes great concern and challenges us to think in these bolder terms. And so I think we need to take that energy palette and paint it in bolder shades of green.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I love your verbiage, including ''thinking outside the barrel.'' I think that is a very powerful concept. I think you sketch the larger challenge that we face. We are addressing with the President and with our leadership in Congress a threat to our planet, as you say—national security, shipping lots of money to people who don't like us very much, financing both sides of the war on terror; and, dealing with fundamental restructuring of our economy.

There aren't very many times when people in Congress—there have only been less than 12,000 men and women who have ever served in this body for the entire history of the United States. There are few times when there are fundamental existential challenges to our society, to our way of life. We are in one of those moments right now with the economy, with our national security, and with the threat to the planet.

As you have described, there is an opportunity now for the United States Congress to lead. In a sense, part of it, and I know from a little experience with some of the civic leadership in the State of New York—and it's certainly true in my home State of Oregon—that there is leadership in the private sector, in churches, in synagogues, college campuses, in businesses large and small. People who are young, who are of a real activist environmental bent, but also people of the greatest generation, people who grew up in the Depression and World War II, who understand about conservation, understand about recycling, understand about working together to meet challenges. We have a

wide range of Americans that are already out there.

It will be interesting, in my judgment, to see if Congress is able to exercise the courage, the vision, and the leadership to catch up with our constituents.

Mr. TONKO. Let me tell you, part of my congressional district includes Schenectady, New York, dubbed ''the city that lights and hauls the world.'' They did locomotive manufacturing. We are a center of innovation, with names like Edison and Steinmetz.

So that Greatest Generation was involved in the manufacturing end of that thought process, that seed that was planted, that invention that was sparked in Schenectady, and they were there manufacturing so that they could light and haul the world.

So along that path of my district where the Erie Canal gave birth to an industrial revolution, where we inspired the westward movement, where this necklace of communities called mill towns emerged because of all of the centers of invention and products that were manufactured, this great generation knows what happens when you are at the front of the line where you are the leader in the world. And this is our chance to assume the leadership mantel of a new century of thinking. Just as we did over a century ago to create some of these ways to address energy needs, we are now at a new juncture that can, again, produce that passage that allows us to impact the entire world with the developments that we can inspire simply by committing resources, whoever it is as a nation, whatever nation assumes that leadership status—and someone will—they're going to control, I think, that global setting. And it should be the U.S.

We as a country not only have the challenges placed before us in terms of a tough economy that now we are working to bring back, a tough job inherited by this President, but he is doing a very thoughtful, remarkable job with keen focus, and includes energy transformation as part of that comeback.

□ 2115

Not only are we challenged, but we have that capacity, the intellectual capacity and the history of having been pioneers, people who have taken that leap of faith and who have seen science and all sorts of experimental procedures as a good thing.

This administration, this House's leadership through Speaker PELOSI and the many chairs understand that we have that capacity, and they are leading us in the right direction. I am convinced.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congressman TONKO, well said. I deeply appreciate you joining me this evening.

We are going to have an opportunity to deal with these issues tomorrow with the budget markup and this next week. And as we have committees moving forward, as you say, moving in these various directions, I look forward to working with you and deeply appreciate your reasoned voice and your experience. It is going to make our legislation better.

Mr. TONKO. Well, I know you stand for progressive policies in Oregon, and you personify that very well. So it is a pleasure to work with you in this House, and we are going to go forward and have a very innovative budget.

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

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S BUDGET SPENDS TOO MUCH, IT TAXES TOO MUCH, AND BORROWS TOO MUCH; AND, THE GIFT OF LIFE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the privilege of being recognized to address you here on the floor of the United States House of Representatives, this Nation's great deliberative body that we are.

I listened with interest to the gentlemen who have made their presentation in the previous hour, and I think back as we start this discussion, this 60-minute Special Order about what has taken place in the country. And many of us watched the President do his press conference. I wouldn't be very surprised if President Obama has at this point reached the threshold for press conferences in his career that would match that of Ronald Reagan's. Ronald Reagan didn't believe in coming before the American people a lot of times in a row. That is clearly not the case with President Obama, Madam Speaker.

We are here dealing with a full-court press across this Nation that seeks to, as the President seeks to, sell his budget to the American people. We have watched the Congressional Budget Office come out with their estimates on what this budget is going to cost. I have watched the target move. I have watched the irresponsibility of the spending grow. And if you add up the cumulative total of the money that has been spent, taxpayers' money borrowed and spent, I don't really know anybody that has that full total. We need to put it down here on the floor and ring it up every day, just like you put the little thermometer up when you have got a fund-raising drive for a new library. The only thing will be that there won't be any new libraries for our children and grandchildren if we continue on this path.

I recall, Madam Speaker, the President making a statement that, in order to repair this economy, we need to construct this multi-legged stool, and the stimulus plan is only one leg of a multi-legged stool. That is by his words.

So I made the remark then that one leg of a multi-legged stool that wasn't a milking stool, that would be one leg. It wasn't a two-legged stool, I have never seen one of those. There would be no practical reason to have a two-legged stool, it would fall over. And so a three-legged stool, he would have said so. But we know it is multi-legged. So that is at least four, maybe more, with the legs of this stool that he would like to construct to solved our economic crisis at a price tag per leg of $1 trillion to $2 trillion each. And when I said that a month or so ago, there was a significant amount of criticism, that I was exaggerating the President's budget.

Madam Speaker, I submit that, no, now the Congressional Budget Office has exceeded my exaggerated estimate in their objective conservative estimate of what this budget is going to cost this country in debt, and cost the American people.

As I listened to the press conference today, I have been familiar with the term that was trotted at nearly every press conference, of which there have been many, and there are two things we can't get a total on: How much money is being spent, and how many press conferences we have had that set policy for this economy. But I have gotten used to the term that the President had inherited a $1 trillion debt from his predecessor.

Madam Speaker, I point out that no President inherits a debt from his predecessor President. A President can't spend any money. A President can't initiate any spending. In fact, a Senator can't initiate spending. It has got to be initiated, by Constitution, right here in the United States House of Representatives.

That budget, that spending, that deficit for the 110th Congress and the deficit coming into the 111th Congress, that is the Pelosi debt, the Pelosi deficit. That is the money that was appropriated by this Congress that established much of the debt that was inherited by the 111th Congress that would be administered by the Executive Branch, which would be the President of the United States. His job is to carry out the policies we set and take care to enforce the laws with due diligence. But his statement has been he inherited a $1 trillion debt. Today we have another milestone I hadn't heard before, Madam Speaker; and that is, now he has inherited a $1.3 trillion debt.

So the inheritance is growing for the President, but it is shrinking for our grandchildren, unless we consider that they are inheriting debt, as well, and the burden of supporting this government and taking it out of duly-earned profits in future, future years, without a prospect of being able to pay for this, without a plan to come out of it.

And the argument that if we just do something to establish socialized medicine, that will solve our economic problems? I cannot connect the dots on that kind of a statement, Madam Speaker, and it concerns me a great deal.

So the inherited debt, which is not inherited from his predecessor the President, President Bush, but it is debt that is inherited from the 110th Congress and previous Congresses, has grown to $1.3 trillion. But the debt the American people inherit out of this is over $8 trillion, perhaps over $10 trillion. And we are still configuring and constructing more legs of this multi-legged stool that is supposed to bring us out of this economic crisis.

I listened as that language unfolded, and you have to listen very carefully to understand the meaning of the President's words. It is usually an artful job of crafting this ambiguity of language, this ambiguity of language that allows me to pull out of it the meaning that I want to know and hear, and allows someone, my ideological opposite, to draw an opposite meaning from the same words and the same phrase. There are a lot of different ways to describe it. I am going to be generous and call it a classical ambiguity style. And I find myself sometimes turning down the volume and waiting for the newspaper the next day, because you really have to parse all this language and analyze it, and it is hard for me to find time for that. But some of this language is more clear than others.

I intend to take up the issue in a moment of the President's appointment to the Office of Legal Counsel, but prior to doing so I think it would be appropriate to transition into the economic circumstances, and recognize the gentlelady from Minnesota for so much time as she may consume to talk about whatever it be on her mind.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman from Iowa, also known as the Stunning STEVE KING of Iowa, as stated by national political commentators, who certainly know what they are talking about. STEVE KING is one of our stalwart patriots who is here on the floor fighting on behalf of the American people.

And while we are here tonight to talk about several subjects, we can't avoid the first subject that is on the table. It is the fact that under President Obama's budget that he has put forward, President Obama's budget simply spends too much, it taxes too much, and it certainly borrows too much.

We are very concerned about the excessive spending that is contained in this bill. It is $3.9 trillion. That is almost $4 trillion in spending under this budget deficit. This is an historical Presidency, historical for the amount of spending that is occurring under this President, $3.9 trillion.

Not only is that a huge amount of money just for spending and just for taxing; we know that just the energy tax alone that the President is putting in his budget is $2 trillion in spending. The President's aides just came out within this last week and said that it is not $646 billion, as we thought, it is nearly $2 trillion. That means for people in Minnesota, for people that are watching this evening, Madam Speaker, we are looking at perhaps an additional $4,000 per year out of the gate that every American household will see in increased taxes for energy. $4,000 a year in increased taxes. Who can afford that right now, when 401(k)s are down, when the value of houses are down, when jobs are on the line? We can't afford that, Madam Speaker. The President surely must know that.

But, borrowing too much. Representative STEVE KING talked about the massive borrowing that is coming from under our President's budget. This is what is remarkable. President Obama is borrowing so much of your tax money, Madam Speaker, of the American people's money, that literally President Obama's debt will be more than all previous Presidents combined.

Madam Speaker, you heard me correctly. From George Washington through George W. Bush, the 43rd President, you can add up the debt level of every one of those Presidents. And day after day after day we hear President Obama blaming the previous administration for the current situation he is in; but President Obama will lay so much debt on the backs of the American people that it will trump all 43 Presidents combined. That is historic.

Take a look. These are the figures that are put out, this is the Office of Management and Budget, and these are the figures that the President himself points to. The figures here on the left are the figures for debt prior to President Obama coming into office. These figures on the right are the debt amount that President Obama by his own figures say will be accumulated, $20 trillion in debt by President Obama's own figures.

As a matter of fact, the Congressional Budget Office came out and said so rosy were the President's figures that he undercounted his debt by $2.3 trillion. He has rosy estimates of how great the economy is going to grow, and he has very conservative estimates on how high his debt will grow. We are concerned, we are very concerned about what the future debt load will be on the American people.

I am often reminded of the Founders; and Representative STEVE KING and I stand here tonight in this chamber, Madam Speaker. Together with yourself, we are literally standing on the shoulders of the Founders of this great country are. And it was the Founders of our country, as we look through the rearview mirror of history, who very clearly made it known that our government was to be a Constitutional government formed on limited government principles. And the day that the Founders signed the Constitution, they also signed the first ten amendments to that Constitution; and those ten amendments were given as a gift, a protection to the individual American. Why? Because our Founders were so concerned about the abuse of taxing authority of their mother country, Great Britain. They were so concerned about that abuse of a taxing authority that they said to the American people in the first ten amendments: We want you to know that your Federal Government will be limited in its power. And in the tenth amendment, they specifically said: These limited powers that we are giving to the Federal Government are all the Federal Government will have. Every other power that there is will be given back to the States. We, the Federal Government, won't hold that power. We give it back to the States.

This is very important to realize, because our President doesn't seem to see it that way, Madam Speaker. Our President seems to think that the time and energy and productive years belongs to Uncle Sam and not to the individual. That is a completely different way of looking at the world than what our Founders viewed.

This evening, Madam Speaker, Representative KING wants to turn the subject now to talking about the gift of life, the gift of human life; the issue that our framers talked about in the Declaration of Independence when they called out for inalienable rights and said that we, Americans, were created by a God; that our creator God created us. He gave us inalienable rights, rights that only God can give, rights that no government confer nor can any government take away. That, among those rights are life, liberty, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness.

Tonight, I know that is what Representative STEVE KING wants to speak about, Madam Speaker. He wants to speak about that cherished gift enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, the right to life, and why we are so genuinely concerned about the nomination to the Office of Legal Counsel that President Obama is making and the individual that Representative KING will be speaking of.

□ 2130

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentlelady from Minnesota for the eloquent presentation on the economic side of this thing and the very smooth transition into the life side. And this is an important issue that sits before this Congress.

Before I go to that issue, I would comment that in looking at the chart of the debt and the cumulative effect of the debt of President Obama's debt compared to the sum total of all the previous administrations, Congress has started, the President signed the appropriations bills, there is another statistic that I saw that was a calculation from the Congressional Budget Office that took this debt in the budget that has been proposed by President Obama and lays it out into the future. The greatest share of our gross domestic product that we have had as debt in a budget was 1945, right at the end of World War II. And this Obama budget projects to be not 100 percent of gross domestic product, but twice as high, 200 percent of gross domestic product is

the calculation that comes from numbers produced by the Congressional Budget Office.

Madam Speaker, I point out another component of this, that yesterday there was a plan that was rolled out that was played off of former Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson, who argued that he should have $700 billion to pick up toxic assets from the lending institutions, and that proposal was rolled out yesterday. And here is how this calculates, and that is that the Federal Government—and I want to make this point, Madam Speaker, before we move on, because I think it is so essentially important that we all understand what is taking place in this country with the nationalization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, reaching into the auto makers with the partial nationalization that is going on there, the nationalization of AIG. The taxpayers own 80 percent of the shares of AIG. They are not worth a lot, but taxpayers own 80 percent of them. We have a big investment in Citigroup. And as the Federal Government swallows up financial institution after financial institution, now this administration reaches in to the mortgages themselves, into institutional investors and individual investors, perhaps, to deal with these toxic mortgages.

Now I have argued, and Congresswoman MICHELE BACHMANN and I have signed on to a piece of legislation last fall and argued that we should use private capital to solve this problem with the toxic debt that exists, the toxic mortgages that are out there, those mortgages that aren't performing and that are going in the tank. It is always preferable in a free-enterprise kind of an economy to have private-sector capital come in and rescue.

The rescue fund, the rescue act was a piece of legislation that I introduced that we are original cosponsors of, and one of the things that it does to put private capital into this very thing, these kind of mortgages. It would suspend capital gains taxes on rescue capital that would come in to pick up the toxic debt. Each time that we have pushed out into the middle of the table the argument that we should be either suspending or eliminating capital gains taxes so that investors could come in and pick up these toxic mortgages, and then if they yield a profit, let them keep the profit tax-free, they will reinvest those dollars and pay taxes on their capital at a later date, Madam Speaker, but we can't get that simple idea of suspending taxes on capital gains to stay on the negotiating table any longer than it takes Chairman FRANK's back of the hand to sweep it off.

Why? Why would the most logical proposal that can be devised, and the simplest one at that, that brings free-market solutions and private-sector investor capital that is looking for a place to go, why would it not be part of the plan to resolve this economic downward spiral that we are in? I will submit it is because the people that are in charge of devising the plan don't really believe in the free markets. If they did, they would want investors to come in.

So the White House has proposed a plan that would partner up the Federal Government, the White House and the taxpayers with private sector investment. Now I'm saying that we could get trillions of dollars of private investment to come in and pick up this toxic debt. You don't want to buy it at any more than the market price is. There is no reason to overpay for it. But you want to take it off the books of the banks and the lenders and let them move on and heal up. So here is the proposal, and it works out to be like this. If an investor wants to put $1 down on the table to invest in these toxic debts that we are not supposed to call ''toxic'' anymore, these mortgage-backed securities, that investor can lay $1 down, and the Federal Government will lay $1 down, and then the Federal Government will guarantee another $12 worth of debt. So, if I'm an individual investor, and I can come up with $1, that means the Federal Government puts another $1 in cash up to match it, and then they guarantee the loan on the balance of that, another $12, so we have got a $14 investment here. Thirteen of the $14 are guaranteed by the Federal Government. The risk for the investor is $1 out of $14, 7 percent of the whole. The Federal Government's risk is 93 percent of the whole, and if this thing goes down, if it washes out, we are, as taxpayers, holding the bag for 93 percent of the loss. And the result—oh, wait a minute. What happens to the profit, Madam Speaker? Well, the profits are shared 50/50 between the Federal Government, the taxpayers and the investor.

So if I can come out and put $1 down and somebody else will guarantee or put down $13, and out of that whole $14 worth of investment I'm going to get half of the return off of my 7 percent investment, and the Federal Government gets half of the return off of their 93 percent of their investment, I think you know what has happened here. They have rejected the idea that we should just not tax the profits, and instead, in the lust for sharing in the profits themselves and expanding the role of the Federal Government, they have rejected a free-market solution and come up with a Big Government solution that buys the Federal Government in in a big way with no way back out again and not even a respectable platitude that would give us a way to define it out of the ambiguity of the language that that is what is going to happen.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield, what we have seen transpire is nothing short of historic. We have seen, since last year, the Federal Government become the bank of first resort and the bank of last resort. We have seen the Federal Government nationalize banks. We have seen the Federal Government step into insurance agencies, become the insurer of first resort and become the insurer of last resort and nationalize the largest insurance company in the United States, AIG.

And now what are we seeing in the Treasury Secretary's proposal that was just given out yesterday, or maybe it was the evening before that, is this: Now the Federal Government will become a hedge fund. That is essentially what we are looking at. The Federal Government will become a hedge fund. The only thing is that we will have toxic assets in the hedge fund.

How does this work? Again, the taxpayer, John Taxpayer becomes the chump that is holding the bag in all of this. Again, it is the taxpayer that is the forgotten man. Because once again, the Federal Government thinks that the taxpayer is good enough to have to pony up the money for all of these ideas that seem to come out that have a lot more to do with centralized government planning and very little to do resembling free-market capitalism.

We are lurching. We are lurching, Madam Speaker, away from free-market capitalism when you come to the point where the Federal Government now decides to throw the dice and become a hedge fund and the taxpayer is the one who is there for all of the loss but not for the gain. I yield back.

Mr. KING of Iowa. If the gentlelady will yield for a question.

It just occurs to me as you speak of this, let's presume that you had $1 million to invest. And you had been looking at a bundle of these mortgage-backed securities with the idea that you could go in and buy up this bundle with $1 million in investment and then manage them in such a way that you could get your money back out and make a profit. It would be a good thing for our economy. It would be a good thing for the investment in that capital.

Now, if you're ready to invest that $1 million in buying up a bundle of mortgage-backed securities, how would you be able to compete with someone who also had $1 million and who had $12 million from the Federal Government, between them then $13 million, to match up against your $1 million? What happens to the free market in this? And how does someone who doesn't want to participate and make an investment like that in direct competition with the Federal Government, how do they possibly find a profit? How can they compete?

Mrs. BACHMANN. Exactly. And we haven't got the question answered yet. It appears that only large institutional investors, a Goldman Sachs or someone like that, will be able to get in on these sweetheart deals. I don't know too many Joe Averages that will be able to buy into this great deal.

So think of it this way in your example: You have $1 million worth of mortgage-backed securities. How much skin in the game would this private investor

have? Again, public-private? Public is $950,000 worth of Federal tax money to $50,000 worth of investment from the private person. But yet what if the yield is positive? For a $50,000 investment, you could have a $500,000 gain. That is pretty amazing. Whereas the Federal Government would be losing 95 percent, and there is nothing to lose when it comes to the private investor.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And reclaiming my time, the gentlelady mentions the institutional investors. And we have also watched the institutions on Wall Street such as Goldman Sachs, AIG, Citigroup and let me see, Lehman Brothers, and Merrill Lynch. The list goes on and on. It occurs to me that some of the same names and faces are inside the room when these decisions are made over and over again.

I think back to AIG, and the situation that flowed across this floor that would go back and back tax those retention bonuses that were paid to the executives. Who makes that decision? Who had the opportunity to say ''no''? Some of the same people that are configuring this program now. It looks like it is designed for the institutional investors.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And if the gentleman would yield on AIG, let's not forget what AIG was. Once the American Government came in and federalized AIG, AIG was essentially a pass-through entity, meaning Federal tax dollars passed through AIG, went directly to Europe and made whole foreign investors. So this is what the taxpayer was paying for. The taxpayer gave money to bail out foreign investors.

My question is, foreign investors were made whole 100 percent across the board. Goldman Sachs—and I'm not trying to pick on them—but they were made whole $13 billion, 100 percent. My question, Madam Speaker, is will the American taxpayer be made whole 100 percent? And when will they be made whole, if ever?

Mr. KING of Iowa. We know that there won't be any opportunity for the American taxpayers to be made whole.

And I'm asking for the taxpayers to wake up. Take on this personal responsibility. Get out the tea bags. The American people can come together and say, enough is more than enough. This is too much. And it is time to put the brakes on this.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If there is one final thing I can add to the gentleman's remarks. It was amazing this afternoon. President Obama had made a statement when he was with the prime minister of Australia. And he was asking Congress to give more power to the Treasury Secretary. As if they don't have enough already, he wants more power to the Treasury Secretary, which means more power for himself, because the Treasury Secretary represents the President.

He wants more power for what? So that if a private corporation becomes in trouble—we are not talking about a bank now. We are talking about a private corporation that becomes in trouble, he wants the Treasury Secretary to have unilateral authority, on his own decision, to walk into a private business and essentially nationalize it, take it over and reorganize.

I'll tell you what. If investors are worried now about the Federal Government coming in, opening up private compensation contracts and deciding to lower the amount of the wage value, you ain't seen nothing yet. Because the Federal Government is going to come in with its Marxist view of economics and make a decision about who is allowed to make what wage based upon what government thinks. This is one of the scariest ideas to come down the pike.

Mr. KING of Iowa. As I reflect on your discussion about this attitude about the Federal Government deciding what executives should be paid, what businesses are viable and which ones should be nationalized, I recall there is a fine and stellar company that is domiciled in Minnesota that had one of their pieces of their investment that was nationalized. It was a rice processing plant in Venezuela. A Hugo Chavez move, that took over a rice plant in Cargill in Venezuela. And this is a pattern. I think if you would read the story about that and then bring it back and just change the names, the places and the dates, put some American companies in there, I don't think you could discern the difference between the specter of what is hanging out for the American businesses that is coming out of the White House and what has actually happened to Cargill in Venezuela.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And we also have a great institution in Minnesota, a great bank, Twin City Federal. Twin City Federal took some of the TARP money, some of the Federal bailout money. They did so because they felt if they didn't they would appear weak because the money was supposed to be only given to strong banks. Twin City Federal made the remarkable move about 1 month ago to return the TARP money. And people didn't know if a bank even had that ability to return the money. But they said they wanted to. They wanted nothing to do with TARP.

I think now they are very happy that they got out of that program now that they see the Federal Government has no hesitation to step into a company and now go in and renegotiate the wage contracts between upper management and high-end employees.

□ 2145

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady. And it occurs to me that at some point, that the NBA, the professional baseball leagues, the NFL, hockey players all are going to eventually come under this scrutiny, and maybe even the Hollywood actors and actresses. If there is something that you can dictate what it is, the wages and benefits of executives in private business, then there is no line by which you wouldn't cross to tell anybody in America what they could or couldn't make.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And it makes me wonder if we will have politically correct wage decisions that will be made. For instance, if you are an executive at a wind-powered plant, is it okay for you to make $800,000 a year; but if you are the president of an oil company, we don't like you so you are only going to make $60,000 a year. You wonder what kind of decisions are coming down the road.

And again, this has nothing to do with free market capitalism or getting our country back in order. This has everything to do with the banana republic and bringing our country's finances down the road to bankruptcy.

I yield back.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And the point that is being made, the undercurrent of this point that is being made is what the gentlelady from Minnesota made at the beginning of this hour, and that is, getting to the foundational principles of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, these rights that come from God that are clearly articulated in the Declaration of Independence and flow through the Constitution that are part and parcel of our law and our culture and rooted in biblical values. These are the things that have made this a great Nation, along with property rights and free market capitalism, the rule of law, which is God's law transferred into this country. And so today it brings us to this point, this point of the subject of the law itself and how it is interpreted, how the Constitution is interpreted, the profound constitutional questions and how the laws that are written within the parameters of the Constitution are interpreted, and how the President himself is advised by the Office of Legal Counsel. And I will submit that the President's appointment to the Office of Legal Counsel is one of the most important appointments that is ever made. And it is an appointment that, according to the Newsweek magazine, the Office of Legal Counsel is the most important government office you have never heard of. This is the job that advises the President and other branches of government on all constitutional questions, evaluates executive orders as to their constitutionality and anything that might come before the President for a signature, a piece of legislation that would come out of here, for example, Madam Speaker, that is also something that would come under the purview of the Office of Legal Counsel.

The President issued, he rescinded the Mexico City Policy on January 23rd of this year, and that Mexico City Policy is a policy that prohibited Federal dollars, our tax dollars, yours and mine and everybody across this country, from being used to fund abortions overseas. That is the Mexico City Policy. I think the President wanted to issue his

Executive order on January 22, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade, but out of respect for the hundreds of thousands of Americans that poured into this city to make their case about the protection of innocent unborn human life, I think out of the fear of backlash, plus he was a little busy signing his Executive order that closes Gitmo a year to the day, it will be on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade on 2010. But on January 23, the next day, he issued the Executive order that rescinded the Mexico City Policy, opened up the door to compel American taxpayers to fund abortions in foreign countries, under the guise of what shall we call it, population control, reproductive rights.

And then, on top of that, we have the appointment of Dawn Johnson to the Office of Legal Counsel to advise the President on executive orders, constitutional questions, and someone who comes to this job with a real track record, a track record of a built-in bias as an assistant to the Office of Legal Counsel, under President Clinton, and someone who has made a whole series of outrageous statements, mostly that have come in conjunction with her doing her job as a legal counsel herself. So these are not, this is not talk that is coming along in the coffee shop. This is language that flows out of legal briefs that she has written.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And if we could just speak a little bit more about the importance of this office, the Office of Legal Counsel. The gentleman had quoted from Newsweek magazine. Newsweek went on to say that this role as Office of Legal Counsel acts as a kind of mini Supreme Court. This office is the President's legal counsel, for all practical purposes. They issue opinions, much like judicial opinions, kind of a mini Supreme Court. Newsweek went on to say its carefully worded opinions are regarded as binding precedent, as final say on what the President and all his agencies can and cannot legally do. I can't think of a more important office to whisper into the President's ear about where the President will come down and stand on issues.

The other thing to recognize, the Office of Legal Counsel is a training ground, so to speak, for future Supreme Court justices. This individual that the President has nominated for this position, previous occupants were Antonin Scalia, William Rehnquist. This is very important that we know who this person is that will be whispering in the President's ear.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time. I thank the gentlelady for that further clarification of the Office of Legal Counsel, the most important government office that most have never heard of, Madam Speaker. And so, as we saw this appointment be made, and looked through some of the documentation of Dawn Johnson, we put together a letter to the President. And this letter is dated March 24 of this year. And there are 62 cosigners on here, both of us, MICHELE BACHMANN and myself included. And it addresses a letter to the President and it says, essentially, Mr. President you stated when you rescinded the Mexico City policy, that no matter what our views, we are united in our determination—and this is a continuing quote—to prevent unintended pregnancies, reduce the need for abortion, and support women and families and the choices they make. I will just close that quote there.

If it is your intent, Mr. President, that we really reach for those kind of goals, and another component of that statement, we must work to find common ground. Close quote.

I hope the President picks up on this. There is no way to find common ground with an individual who holds such utterly biased views. And this is, in my judgment, one of them.

And this is a quote from Dawn Johnson, and the notion of legal restrictions as some kind of a reasonable compromise, perhaps to help make abortions safe, legal and rare, which is a statement that has come out of a many leading Democrats, including Hillary Clinton. This proves to be nonsensical in her view. And I think it is the rare part that she objects so much too. And she goes on to quote in a different location, progressives must not portray all abortions as tragedies. Absent unforeseen technological and medical changes, abortion is unlikely to become truly rare, and certainly not nonexistent.

In other words, this is a rejection of the position, the most, I will say the most friendly position that I get from people that do not support the protection of innocent unborn human life. At least they will concede that there is a moral abhorrence to it, and it should be minimized if they aren't willing to eliminate. And that was something that Hillary Clinton said. But this statement by Dawn Johnson, I think, makes it clear, Madam Speaker, that she says that abortion will never be rare and safe, legal and rare, as a matter of fact. It will not be. And that just opens up the door to further dialog on this particular issue. There are many issues that I would object to. But I focus this on the abortion side.

And another one of these statements that we carry to the President is this: And this, Madam Speaker, is among the most offensive statements that the American people are asked to accept as part and parcel of the package that you get when the President appoints someone to be, to head of the Office of Legal Counsel who carries this kind of a bias against the people who stand up for innocent human life. And this is her statement on abortion regulation. The State has conscripted her body for its own ends because the State has an interest in babies being born. If a State is not interested in that, you will see a civilization ultimately die. So she goes, recognizing a compelling State interest in protecting the fetus would provide States with an open-ended invitation to force pregnant women to act in whatever ways the State determined were optimal for the fetus, thereby, and I pay attention to this, thereby reducing pregnant women to no more than fetal containers. That is a remark of contempt towards mothers, toward the cherished role that they have in bringing these young children to birth and nurturing them with all the love they possibly can. It is offensive to me to think that someone has called my mother a fetal container.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If I could add to the gentleman's remarks. I think that the other thing that is glaring in this statement by Ms. Johnson is the fact that she said, recognizing a compelling State interest in protecting the fetus. I would just like to remind her that the State is not only interested in protecting the fetus, the State is also interested in protecting the woman. Many States all across the United States of America have laws known as women's right to know because there is an intention that women who are abortion-minded know what the consequence of that decision will mean. Many women become infertile for life. Once they have an abortion they can never bear another child after that. And many women don't know what the consequences of an early abortion will be. That is a violent act. An abortion is a violent act to a woman's body.

Also, women have tremendous emotional pain that they may deal with, not just for an afternoon, or not just for a weekend, they may, for the next 10 years, suffer with depression and all manner of disorders that they may have to deal with emotionally for years and years because they didn't fully comprehend the consequences of their decision.

And while women should never be viewed as fetal containers—I have never heard any more crass language in my life than the imagery that Dawn Johnson brought up—it is also true that babies are more than a product of tissue. Babies are a gift. Just as women are a gift, babies are a gift. Human life is to be cherished, not discarded.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And reclaiming my time from the gentlelady from Minnesota who has lived her life in demonstration to that commitment to life, your own children and the numbers of foster children that you have nurtured, you are the woman that lives in Minnesota and had so many children but always knew what to do. And I have not quite figured out how to put that into the proper alliteration, but that is the concept.

Mrs. BACHMANN. We had great kids, Representative KING. That's how we did it, and a great husband.

Mr. KING of Iowa. It definitely helps to have a good husband. I remind my wife of that, and I appreciate that comment.

Going back to this, as you mentioned, it was the Office of Legal Counsel is a perfect position to whisper

things into the ears of the President, to get the President's attention, to be on his agenda, to make legal arguments, to make arguments that are going to help him rationalize and set the policy, a policy like the Mexico City.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And to help him make his statements for him because these are written statements that become binding precedent within the President's office. This is an amazing amount of power.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Written statements with binding precedent, and the ability to write that into statements or whisper into the President's ear fetal containers, Mr. President.

Mrs. BACHMANN. It also binds the administrative agencies. So this has power throughout the entire Presidential administration. Every agency, every department would be bound by these statements.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And it would limit the ability of each of the agencies to react to the very policy that this Congress has established, this Congress might establish. And this kind of pejorative language has no place in law. And it has no place in the dialog of America. It has no place in families and humanity, has no place in nurturing little children, and it has no place in taking care of the mothers, the brothers and the sisters with the idea that a fetal container, that reduces the unborn child, that innocent little baby, to being a term that hardly makes it as a medical term.

These aren't the only comments that have been made by Dawn Johnson. I just picked them up as they come along. There is quite a stack here. And I don't know if I will get through them all, Madam Speaker, but here is one that is also indicative of a similar kind of language in the previous quote where Dawn Johnson, again, the President's appointee to head up the Office of Legal Counsel, the argument says the argument that women who become pregnant have in some sense consented to the pregnancy belies reality. I would like to think that most women who are mothers have consented to the pregnancy. Not all, but most. The large number of women who never receive proper information about contraception and others who are the inevitable losers in the contraception lottery, no more consent to pregnancy than pedestrians consent to being struck by drunk drivers. Pregnant mothers equivalent to being struck by drunk drivers when they become pregnant? That reduces this thing down into an act of almost negligent violence, if not willful violence. I think it is an act of love.

□ 2200

Mrs. BACHMANN. It almost seems contrary to feminism because feminism empowers women and believes that women have the capability to give consent, informed consent. The way that this is written by Dawn Johnson, it appears that she is saying that women are without capacity to give consent even in an area of becoming pregnant.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, even when they make that decision themselves.

I as a new grandfather myself 3 weeks ago today, I think of those children who are loved and wanted and planned and of those families who are not able to have children and who are lined up to adopt children who might become available. There are many more families in this country who are waiting for a child to come along who they can adopt and nurture into the bosom of their family and raise as one of their own than there are unwanted children in this country.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And if I could just correct the gentleman, my opinion is that every child is a wanted child. That is one of Planned Parenthood's trademarks that, I believe, is one of the biggest myths that has been perpetrated in the last 40 years—every child a wanted child——

Mr. KING of Iowa. By God.

Mrs. BACHMANN. As if there are unwanted children. Every child is a wanted child.

I can attest to the fact that there are open arms for every child who is born. If a child is considered less than perfect, has a physical or a mental disability, there are homes all across the United States that are begging and pleading and waiting for a child. None of us can ever forget the words of Mother Teresa, who said, ''If you don't want the children, I want the children. Give them to me. I will take them,'' this diminutive, little nun from Calcutta who was willing to take any child from across the planet. Here in the United States, we have willing, open hearts that would take every child who is born in this country.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, raising up on the point made by the gentlelady from Minnesota, it is true that every child is both wanted as is wanted, but also, every child is planned and wanted by God. It is his will, and we need to acknowledge that will and nurture and love these children with all of our ability and with all of our will.

It takes me to another quote by Dawn Johnson. This one fits right in with the category. Perhaps it is more egregious. This is the infamous KKK quote where she says, ''The terrorists' behavior of petitioners,'' meaning those people who are praying for life outside the abortion clinic, ''is remarkably similar to the conspiracy of violence and intimidation carried out by the Ku Klux Klan against which Congress intended this statute to protect.''

Madam Speaker, I am watching my constituents by the hundreds on these 40 days of Lent, praying outside Planned Parenthood in Sioux City, Iowa throughout these 40 days, and they have been labeled now to be similar to the KKK by the prospective head of the Office of Legal Counsel who would be whispering these terms into the President's ear and writing legal opinions and bringing influence on the enforcement effort of the Federal Government, bringing that up against people who are exercising their first amendment rights of freedom of assembly and religion to protect innocent life.

Mrs. BACHMANN. This is a remarkable statement because it seems to invoke the worst hate speech that you could possibly make. To call out those who are praying on behalf of life and to liken them to terrorists and to call them terrorists, that seems to me invoke a hate speech and also a form of bigotry, religious bigotry of the worst order.

This really calls into question for me the President's judgment in choosing someone like Dawn Johnson, who used this type of language, and putting her in the position of being Office of Legal Counsel. I think it is shocking and a stunning choice, and it really calls into question President Obama's judgment in this selection.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, the gentlelady has articulated this, I think, very well.

We'll add these expressions up together: pregnant mothers are the equivalent of being hit by drunk drivers; that abortion will never be rare; the equivalent of the KKK are people who are demonstrating and protesting that we should protect and support innocent human life.

I'll put another one up here and add another quote to that. This is another quote from Dawn Johnson.

She says, ''The experience of an abortion is no longer traumatic. The response of most women to the experience is relief.''

I don't have any experience with that, but that is not the message that I get from the people I talk to who come to this city. The strongest leaders in the pro-life movement and always among them will be women who have had abortions and who have suffered the trauma, the psychological trauma of abortion. They don't feel relief. They feel compelled to pray and march and demonstrate until Roe v. Wade is overturned, and we can protect innocent life in this country as God intended.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I would add that, with all due respect, this is one of the most ignorant comments that I have ever heard—that the experience is no longer traumatic. Speak to anyone who deals in the aftermath of dealing with women who have had abortions.

My best friend runs a crisis pregnancy center. She has given her life and has poured her life out because she loves women and she loves abortion-minded women. She wants to meet them at the point of their deepest crises. She has told me that, for women who come in who are considering abortion and also for women who have had an abortion and who come to her, it is

completely traumatic. They agonize as they walk into the clinic. They agonize, the women who have had previous abortions, after they have had the abortion. It is traumatic.

There are reams of scientific papers that have been done that speak loudly to the trauma that the woman has experienced, let alone the trauma that the baby has experienced. That baby's life was taken in cold blood. That baby was murdered in cold blood. Not traumatic? It was traumatic for that innocent child, but it was equally as traumatic for the mother. The mother realizes and understands what has occurred. This is traumatic. To make that statement, to me, is heartless at worst and ignorant at best.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Reclaiming my time, the trauma that has been visited upon many, many thousands of women in this country has brought about the beginnings of an entire organization, of a movement that has significant inertia and membership, and that is called Women Deserve Better. They come to this city continually and make the case that women deserve better. They deserve proper psychological and medical counsel. They deserve to be treated with respect. They deserve to understand what is going on, and they do not deserve to be told that they are going to feel relief or that it used to be but is no longer a traumatic experience.

Mrs. BACHMANN. That is the cruelest thing that could be done to a woman who is in crisis—to tell her that this is an easy quick fix and that you will experience relief. Women are strong, capable, intelligent people. They can handle the truth, and they deserve to be given full scientific evidence of the procedure they are about to undergo if that is the case. We need to respect women, and these statements do not reflect a true respect for women.

Mr. KING of Iowa. But they may reflect the majority of the input that is going into the ears of the President as these decisions are being made, and they would reflect the position of the Office of Legal Counsel if Dawn Johnson is confirmed by the United States Senate.

Now, we can expect that these ideas—this philosophy, this pejorative approach—is not balanced and that they do not bring a sense of legality or legal scholarship or constitutional analysis. They bring a bias into this discussion. These kinds of biased positions would be reflected throughout the President's positions because he is the one who has chosen her. It does reflect his positions to some degree.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I would say that this reflects his position completely because we know, from the President's previous votes when he was a State Senator in Illinois, he was the most pro-abortion State Senator in Illinois. His voting record here in the United States Senate was that of the most pro-abortion United States Senator.

He fully supported partial birth abortion, one of the most gruesome, cruel procedures of infanticide one could ever imagine. Also, he voted for the Born Alive Act, which meant that he stood on the floor, as a matter of fact, in the Illinois State Senate and argued that children who were born, born alive, did not necessarily have a right to live, that as to those children who were born alive after a ''botched'' abortion, the doctor would have the right to kill that baby after it was born, and now President Obama voted in favor of that unthinkably gruesome bill.

Mr. KING of Iowa. And he argued in favor of it.

The foundational principle that he argued for, Madam Speaker, was: A woman who sought to have an abortion had a right to a dead baby even if they botched the abortion and the baby survived.

That is not a moral principle. That is not a legal principle. It is a myopic principle that is pulled up within the political lobbying that comes out of Planned Parenthood. It cannot be based on anything moral; it cannot be based in law. The philosophy of the President was also reflected during the campaign trail when he was speaking as if his daughters got pregnant—out of wedlock, I presume is what he was referring to.

He said, ''I don't want my daughters punished with a baby.'' I listened to that tape tonight to be sure I heard it right. Those are the words of the President of the United States. He actually said, referring to his daughters, ''I don't want them punished with a baby.''

I don't believe a baby is punishment. I believe a baby is a gift and that the people whom I know who love their children as we do ours and our grandchildren as we do ours see them all as gifts, all as gifts from God.

Mrs. BACHMANN. One of the most gruesome quotes—and I don't know if the gentleman has this one—is when she is referring to her beliefs and to people who are like-minded.

She said, ''Progressives,'' which would be far-left liberals, ''must not portray all abortions as tragedies. Absent unforeseen technological and medical changes, abortion is unlikely to become truly rare and certainly not nonexistent.''

In this statement, she is lamenting the fact that abortion could become rare. She wants abortion to occur. When do you ever hear anyone say that they don't want abortion to be rare? But that is what Dawn Johnson is saying.

When President Bill Clinton was running for President, he said he wanted abortions safe, legal and rare. Hillary Clinton said the same thing when she was running for President. Barack Obama—I'm not sure what his words were, but those were the words of the people running for President. Dawn Johnson is refuting that. She doesn't want abortion to be rare. She wants to see abortions occur. That is in the realm of the macabre. I am amazed at that statement.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady.

I have one more shocking statement made by Dawn Johnson. Now, remember, this is the person who would be doing the constitutional analysis, making that decision and making the same thing as a legal opinion, a binding legal opinion to the entire executive branch to one degree or another. She would have the ear of the President. I think Dawn Johnson has a major flaw in her jurisprudence even though she is probably very well trained. This is what she says about the difference between the Bush administration and the Clinton administration on balance.

She calls the Bush administration's claims to executive power ''extreme, extraordinary, implausible, illegitimate, appalling, and abusive.'' By comparison, as to the Clinton administration, ''I do not have any specific criticisms of the Clinton administration in these regards.'' Well, I think that tells us about the lack of partisanship that is there.

Let's see. I was looking for a quote. I have it in front of me. I will take it back to the slavery issue where Dawn Johnson said, ''Statutes that can curtail a woman's abortion choice are disturbingly suggestive of involuntary servitude, prohibited by the 13th amendment, in that forced pregnancy requires a woman to provide continuous physical service to the fetus in order to further the State's asserted interest.''

Slavery? I could read through that Constitution dozens of times over. I could pour through this case law over and over again. I invite the law school creative people. I don't know who would come up with the idea that the opportunity to be a mother was equivalent to slavery.

For a couple of minutes, I will yield to the gentlelady.

Mrs. BACHMANN. You know, I would say that this heavy tax burden that the Obama administration is laying upon the American people has more to do with involuntary servitude than the fact of a woman who has the opportunity to carry an unborn child to term and to give life to that baby. Most women consider that a privilege and a blessing, and they pray for that opportunity so that they can have the chance to share in the joy of motherhood together with their husband, to be able to bring life and to cooperate with God and bring life into the world.

Life is a beautiful thing. It is precious. It is something not to be wasted. It certainly cannot be equated with involuntary servitude, which is slavery. Slavery is what we are looking at right now with the debt burden that we are seeing from the Obama administration, where we are looking at having more debt under President Obama than under all previous 43 Presidents combined. That is involuntary servitude when a person has to work three-quarters of the year just to pay their tax bill, and that is what we are looking at

down the road for our kids and grandkids, because this Obama administration is clearly spending too much, taxing too much and borrowing too much.

□ 2215

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentlelady.

And I would just remind the gentlelady, the Speaker, that we have, by letter, called upon the President to withdraw the name of Don Johnson to head up his Office of Legal Council for these reasons that we have argued here tonight, for a multitude of reasons that we didn't get to in the time that we had, for moral reasons, constitutional reasons, statutory reasons, reasons of logic, common sense, and understanding the nature of humanity; for reasons that we want to see this Nation continue to ascend in all of the levels of morality, and economics, and national defense, and culture, and vision so that this country can be moved to the next level of its destiny that's positive, one that we can be proud of, one that will carry us forward and make our children proud, one day that our children can come to the floor of the House of Representatives, somebody's children, the next generation, and say, We stand on the shoulders of our forefathers, our predecessors, the people who stood up for life, the people who stood up for what is right, the people who stood up for the Constitution and the principles of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that are embodied in the Declaration of Independence; and the argument that these rights come from God, and they are not to be torn asunder by someone who is a liberal activist who would lay out this list of offenses against life and family itself, the very core and foundation of American life.

That is what we have going on here. No good can come of it. This is the reminder that we have. This is the letter with 62 signatures that we sent to the President to withdraw the name of Don Johnson, appoint someone with a Constitutional understanding and a commitment to those principles and not an activist. We don't need an activist to head up this Office of Legal Council. We need someone who will understand the Constitution and the law and respect life.

And with that, Madam Speaker, I would thank the gentlelady from Minnesota.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HILL (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on account of official business.

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of illness.

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. SABLAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SABLAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, March 31.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, March 31.

Mr. GOODLATTE, for 5 minutes, today and March 25.

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KRATOVIL, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 25, 2009, 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:

1025. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's report entitled, ''2008 Packers and Stockyards Program Annual Report,'' pursuant to the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921, as amended; to the Committee on Agriculture.

1026. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-Propenoic acid, monoester with 1,2-propanediol, polymer with a-[4-(ethenyloxy) butyl]-w-hydroxypoly (oxy-1,2-ethanediyl) and 2,5-furandione; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0620; FRL-8396-9] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1027. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-Propenoic acid, polymer with a-[4-(ethenyloxy) butyl]-w-hydroxypoly (oxy-1,2-ethanediyl) and 1,2-propanediol mono-2-propenoate, potassium sodium salt; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0617 FRL-8397-2] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1028. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-Propenoic acid, polymer with a-[4-(ethenyloxy) butyl]-w-hydroxypoly (oxy-1,2-ethanediyl), sodium salt; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0621; FRL-8397-1] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1029. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-Propenoic acid, 2-hydroxyethyl ester, polymer with a-[4-(ethenyloxy)butyl]-w- hyroxypoly (oxy-1,2-ethanediyl); Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0618; FRL-8396-7] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1030. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — 2-Propenoic acid, polymer with a-[4-(ethenyloxy) butyl]-w-hydroxypoly (oxy-1,2-ethanediyl) and 2,5-furandione, sodium salt; Tolerance Exemption [EPA-HQ-OPP-2008-0619; FRL-8396-8] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1031. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Bacillus Mycoides Isolate J; Temporary Exemption From the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2005-0303; FRL-8400-2] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1032. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Benfluralin, Carbaryl, Diazinon, Dicrotophos, Fluometruon, Formetanate Hydrochloride, Glyphosate, Metolachlor, Napropamide, Norflurazon, Pyrazon, and Tau-Fluvalinate; Technical Amendment [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-1170; FRL-8402-1] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1033. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Chlorimuron-ethyl; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2007-0301; FRL-8402-6] received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1034. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Protection of Stratospheric Ozone: Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements for the Import of Halon-1301 Aircraft Fire Extinguishing Vessels [EPA-HQ-OAR-2005-0131; FRL-8779-6] (RIN: 2060-AM46) received March 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1035. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's ''Major'' final rule — Implementation of a Dose Standard After 10,000 Years [NRC-2005-0011] (RIN: 3150-AH68) received March 19, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1036. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Investment Surveys: BE-11, Annual Survey of U.S. Direct Investment Abroad [Docket No.: 080731960-81629-02] (RIN: 0691-AA66) received March 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1037. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary Legislative Affairs, Department of

State, transmitting the Department's report required by the Omnibus Appropriation, Public Law 105-277, Section 2215 on ''Overseas Surplus Property''; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1038. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1039. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1040. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1041. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1042. A letter from the Senior Associate General Counsel, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1043. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer/Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1044. A letter from the Chief Operating Officer/Executive Secretary, U.S. Agency for International Development, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

1045. A letter from the Chief, Branch of Listing, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Revised Designation of Critical Habitat for the Contiguous United States Distinct Population Segment of the Canada Lynx [FWS-R6-ES-2008-0026] [92210-1117-0000-B4] (RIN: 1018-AV78) received March 11, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

1046. A letter from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting the fourth annual report on crime victims' rights, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 3771, section 104(a); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

1047. A letter from the Acting Trade Representative, United States Trade Representative, transmitting the 2009 Trade Policy Agenda and the 2008 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program as prepared by the Administration, pursuant to 19 U.S.C. 2213, as amended; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

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:

Mr. WAXMAN: Committee on Energy and Commerce. H.R. 1259. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with respect to the distribution of the drug dextromethorphan, and for other purposes (Rept. 111–49). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. CONYERS: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 1575. A bill to authorize the Attorney General to limit or recover excessive compensation paid or payable by entities that have received Federal financial assistance on or after September 1, 2008 (Rept. 111–50). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 280. A resolution providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 146) to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program for the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes (Rept. 111–51). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. POLIS: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 281. A resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1404) to authorize a supplemental funding source for catastrophic emergency wildland fire suppression activities on Department of the Interior and National Forest System lands, to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop a cohesive wildland fire management strategy, and for other purposes (Rept. 111–52). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. DAVIS of Alabama (for himself, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. CAO, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. CARNAHAN, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts):

H.R. 1677. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend and expand the benefits for businesses operating in empowerment zones, enterprise communities, or renewal communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BONO MACK:

H.R. 1678. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a bad debt deduction to doctors to partially offset the cost of providing uncompensated care required to be provided under amendments made by the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. HARPER, and Mr. MCCARTHY of California):

H.R. 1679. A bill to provide for the replacement of lost income for employees of the House of Representatives who are members of a reserve component of the armed forces who are on active duty for a period of more than 30 days, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, 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. ARCURI:

H.R. 1680. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants to promote professional retrofit installation of fire alarm detection systems and other fire detection and prevention technologies in nursing homes, hospice facilities, and other appropriate facilities; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BOSWELL:

H.R. 1681. A bill to improve the coordination between the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to better provide care to members and the Armed Forces and veterans; to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, 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. CONAWAY (for himself and Ms. SUTTON):

H.R. 1682. A bill to amend title 23, United States Code, to require States to develop and implement highway bridge management systems; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. MCDERMOTT (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, and Mr. STARK):

H.R. 1683. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by requiring a Federal emission permit for the sale or use of greenhouse gas emission substances, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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. HASTINGS of Washington (for himself, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. FLEMING, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. DUNCAN, Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. MANZULLO, and Mr. PUTNAM):

H.R. 1684. A bill to preserve the rights granted under second amendment to the Constitution in national parks and national wildlife refuge areas; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York:

H.R. 1685. A bill to provide for the acquisition, construction, and improvement of child care facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. LYNCH:

H.R. 1686. A bill to provide for the protection and integrity of the United States mail; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Mr. BOCCIERI (for himself, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. AUSTRIA, Mr. SPACE, Mr. LATTA, and Mr. JORDAN of Ohio):

H.R. 1687. A bill to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at McKinley Avenue and Third Street, SW., Canton, Ohio, as the ''Ralph Regula Federal Building and United States Courthouse''; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Ms. BORDALLO (for herself and Mr. AUSTRIA):

H.R. 1688. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to ensure that commissioned officers who serve in a reserve component of the Armed Forces are able to retire in the highest grade in which they have successfully served; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. BOUCHER (for himself, Mr. UPTON, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. MURTHA, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. DAVIS of

Alabama, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. HILL, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, and Mr. WILSON of Ohio):

H.R. 1689. A bill to accelerate the development and early deployment of systems for the capture and storage of carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel electric generation facilities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Science and Technology, 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 Mrs. CAPPS (for herself, Mr. DELAHUNT, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FARR, Mr. SESTAK, and Mr. MCGOVERN):

H.R. 1690. A bill to amend the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to make grants to coastal states to support voluntary State efforts to initiate and complete surveys of coastal waters to identify potential areas suitable for the exploration, development, and production of renewable energy, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Ms. DELAURO (for herself, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. BACA, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. HILL, Ms. BEAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. BERRY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BOREN, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. BOYD, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. CARNEY, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CHANDLER, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. COURTNEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mrs. HALVORSON, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. DICKS, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. MASSA, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. NYE, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. HARE, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. HOLT, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. BARROW, Mr. SARBANES, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. KANJORSKI, Ms. KAPTUR, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Ms. KILROY, Mr. KIND, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. CAPPS, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MACK, Mr. MAFFEI, Mrs. MALONEY, Ms. FUDGE, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Mr. MURTHA, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. OLVER, Mr. ORTIZ, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. TONKO, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. PETERSON, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. REYES, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. SIRES, Mr. SKELTON, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. SPACE, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. STARK, Mr. STUPAK, Ms. SUTTON, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. TSONGAS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. WEINER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. WITTMAN, Mr. WOLF, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. TITUS, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. MARKEY of Colorado, Mr. HALL of Texas, Ms. KOSMAS, Mr. ROGERS of Alabama, Mr. FILNER, Mr. SOUDER, and Mr. POLIS):

H.R. 1691. A bill to require that health plans provide coverage for a minimum hospital stay for mastectomies, lumpectomies, and lymph node dissection for the treatment of breast cancer and coverage for secondary consultations; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Education and Labor, 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. FORTENBERRY:

H.R. 1692. A bill to amend the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act to exempt ordinary books from the lead limit in such Act; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GORDON of Tennessee (for himself, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia):

H.R. 1693. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the coverage of marriage and family therapist services and mental health counselor services under part B of the Medicare Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, 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. HOLT (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WELCH, Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. PAYNE):

H.R. 1694. A bill to amend the American Battlefield Protection Act of 1996 to establish a battlefield acquisition grant program for the acquisition and protection of nationally significant battlefields and associated sites of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. LOBIONDO (for himself and Ms. GIFFORDS):

H.R. 1695. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to reduce the minimum age for receipt of military retired pay for non-regular service from 60 to 55; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. PALLONE (for himself, Mr. SIRES, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 1696. A bill to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently prohibit the conduct of offshore drilling on the outer Continental Shelf in the Mid-Atlantic and North Atlantic planning areas; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. PALLONE (for himself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 1697. A bill to ensure the coordination and integration of Indian tribes in the National Homeland Security strategy and to establish an Office of Tribal Government Homeland Security within the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, 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. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. LOEBSACK, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. BLUMENAUER, and Ms. BORDALLO):

H.R. 1698. A bill to establish the Green Bank to assist in the financing of qualified clean energy projects and qualified energy efficiency projects; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, 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 Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. PETRI, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. LINDER, Mr. WU, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HOLT, and Mr. KIND):

H. Con. Res. 78. Concurrent resolution expressing the support of the Congress regarding the need to facilitate State innovation in national health care reform; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. CLAY:

H. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that a commemorative postage stamp should be issued to honor Wilton ''Wilt'' Chamberlain; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Ms. BORDALLO, and Mr. SABLAN):

H. Con. Res. 80. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center for an event to celebrate the birthday of King Kamehameha; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. PENCE:

H. Res. 277. A resolution electing a minority member to a certain standing committee; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MCGOVERN (for himself and Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California):

H. Res. 278. A resolution recognizing the paramount need to address the threat of international terrorism and protect the international security of the United States by reducing the number of and accessibility to nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation, and directing a portion of the resulting savings towards child survival, hunger, and universal education, and calling on the President to take action to achieve these goals; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania:

H. Res. 279. A resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Eleventh Congress; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. FORTENBERRY (for himself and Mr. ELLISON):

H. Res. 282. A resolution recognizing the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. UPTON, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, Mr. SCHAUER, Mr. CAMP, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Mr. KIRK, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. ADLER of New Jersey, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. HODES, Mr. FILNER, Mr. CROWLEY, Ms. KILROY, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. YARMUTH, Mr. COHEN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. KAGEN, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POLIS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. GRAYSON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. SESTAK, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia, Mr. ACKERMAN, and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina):

H. Res. 283. A resolution honoring the life, achievements, and contributions of Rabbi Charles H. Rosenzveig; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. PETERS:

H. Res. 284. A resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces both at home and abroad; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. SHIMKUS (for himself and Mr. KUCINICH):

H. Res. 285. A resolution congratulating the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the 1000th anniversary of Lithuania and celebrating the rich history of Lithuania; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 18: Mr. LATTA.

H.R. 22: Mr. BLUNT, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 23: Mr. PAYNE, Mr. LYNCH, and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

H.R. 153: Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky.

H.R. 154: Mr. HARE.

H.R. 186: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 199: Mr. BURTON of Indiana and Mr. BARTLETT.

H.R. 211: Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, and Mr. INSLEE.

H.R. 235: Mr. BLUNT, Mr. NYE, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. MICA, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. HIMES.

H.R. 389: Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 442: Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina.

H.R. 503: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 510: Mr. PUTNAM and Mr. MURTHA.

H.R. 537: Mr. PLATTS.

H.R. 556: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California.

H.R. 562: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

H.R. 618: Mr. CONAWAY.

H.R. 621: Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. YARMUTH, and Mr. GUTHRIE.

H.R. 627: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 648: Ms. SPEIER.

H.R. 658: Mr. SALAZAR.

H.R. 676: Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. LUJÁN, and Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 722: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 731: Mr. MITCHELL and Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 734: Ms. WATERS, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, Ms. Titus, Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. POMEROY.

H.R. 745: Mr. BARROW and Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 775: Ms. GRANGER, Mr. ROSS, Mr. PETERSON, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. GRIFFITH, Mr. TEAGUE, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. HALL of New York, and Mr. MCCAUL.

H.R. 776: Ms. HIRONO.

H.R. 789: Mr. SESTAK, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 795: Mr. MICHAUD and Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 816: Mr. CARTER and Ms. PINGREE of Maine.

H.R. 832: Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 847: Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 891: Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. TSONGAS, and Mr. STARK.

H.R. 899: Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 933: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 949: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 952: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. ALTMIRE, and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 980: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 985: Mr. POE of Texas and Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 1016: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. NYE, and Mr. RODRIGUEZ.

H.R. 1018: Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 1050: Mr. ISSA, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. AKIN, Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. FLEMING, and Mr. LUETKEMEYER.

H.R. 1062: Mr. MANZULLO and Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 1080: Mr. PIERLUISI.

H.R. 1126: Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. TITUS, and Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 1167: Mr. HONDA and Mr. GUTIERREZ.

H.R. 1185: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. DEFAZIO, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1188: Mr. PRICE of Georgia, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. HELLER, Ms. SPEIER, Mrs. BONO MACK, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.

H.R. 1189: Mr. SESSIONS, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. THORNBERRY, and Mr. BERMAN.

H.R. 1195: Mr. CARNEY.

H.R. 1197: Mr. SPACE.

H.R. 1203: Mr. SIRES, Mr. ALTMIRE, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. KING of New York, Ms. FOXX, and Mr. WESTMORELAND.

H.R. 1204: Mr. CONAWAY and Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1205: Mr. HELLER, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MARSHALL, and Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 1207: Mr. MILLER of Florida and Mr. BLUNT.

H.R. 1209: Mr. HARE, Mr. MICA, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. HENSARLING, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. CARTER, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. MOLLOHAN, Mr. BOYD, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. HILL, Mr. GORDON of Tennessee, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. CHANDLER, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. ELLSWORTH, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. BRALEY of Iowa, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. DRIEHAUS, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. CARNAHAN, Mr. REYES, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. POMEROY, Ms. BEAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. KILROY, Mr. DICKS, Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania, Mr. HODES, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. KLEIN of Florida, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. COHEN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MINNICK, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. SIRES, Ms. GIFFORDS, Mr. KRATOVIL, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. BOCCIERI, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. YARMUTH, Mrs. DAHLKEMPER, Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. BERRY, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. ARCURI, Mr. CAPUANO, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. MCMAHON, Mr. ROSS, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. BOREN, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. WU, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. KOSMAS, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. TEAGUE, Mr. SHULER, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. POLIS, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. COOPER, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. OBERSTAR, and Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1214: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 1223: Mr. DAVIS of Illinois.

H.R. 1232: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 1240: Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut.

H.R. 1242: Mrs. EMERSON.

H.R. 1256: Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. FARR, and Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1294: Mrs. MYRICK and Mr. OLSON.

H.R. 1310: Ms. CLARKE, Mr. MCMAHON, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. TONKO, Mr. MINNICK, Mr. SPRATT, Ms. WATERS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 1317: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan.

H.R. 1326: Mr. COHEN and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 1341: Mr. MAFFEI, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. MEEK of Florida.

H.R. 1349: Mr. KAGEN, Mr. BILBRAY, and Mrs. CAPITO.

H.R. 1361: Mr. PETERSON.

H.R. 1392: Mr. GINGREY of Georgia.

H.R. 1402: Ms. BERKLEY.

H.R. 1403: Ms. FOXX and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 1404: Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, and Mr. BAIRD.

H.R. 1410: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1428: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1433: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1434: Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1444: Mr. DOGGETT and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.

H.R. 1452: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1454: Mr. MICHAUD and Mr. WITTMAN.

H.R. 1457: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1461: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California.

H.R. 1470: Ms. BEAN, Mr. PAUL, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 1479: Mr. GUTIERREZ.

H.R. 1483: Mr. SESTAK.

H.R. 1499: Mr. DOYLE and Mr. GALLEGLY.

H.R. 1509: Mr. ARCURI.

H.R. 1520: Mr. WITTMAN and Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 1521: Mr. MACK, Mr. CHAFFETZ, and Mr. RODRIGUEZ.

H.R. 1547: Mr. KLEIN of Florida and Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 1548: Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 1549: Mr. HODES and Ms. SHEA-PORTER.

H.R. 1550: Mr. KILDEE and Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana.

H.R. 1570: Mr. PLATTS and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 1575: Ms. HIRONO and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 1577: Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, and Mr. MITCHELL.

H.R. 1582: Mr. PLATTS.
H.R. 1584: Mr. ORTIZ and Mr. MICHAUD.
H.R. 1600: Mr. BURTON of Indiana and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 1616: Mr. TOWNS Ms. LEE of California, Mr. NADLER of New York, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. BERMAN, and Mrs. LOWEY.
H.R. 1619: Mr. KENNEDY Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. CARNAHAN, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 1628: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H.R. 1636: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. BRALEY of Iowa.
H.R. 1646: Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.J. Res. 39: Mr. LAMBORN.
H. Con. Res. 16: Mr. LAMBORN.
H. Con. Res. 55: Mr. HERGER.
H. Con. Res. 60: Mr. KING of New York, Mr. MICHAUD, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. CHAFFETZ, Mr. LATTA, Mr. TAYLOR, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. Griffith, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HODES, Mr. KILDEE, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. NUNES, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. ROONEY, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. BERRY, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. LEE of New York.
H. Res. 20: Mr. LAMBORN.
H. Res. 156: Mr. CAO.
H. Res. 182: Ms. WATERS.
H. Res. 230: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. HINOJOSA, and Mrs. NAPOLITANO.
H. Res. 232: Mr. WESTMORELAND, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado.
H. Res. 234: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. GIFFORDS.
H. Res. 238: Mr. BOOZMAN.
H. Res. 244: Mr. OLSON.
H. Res. 247: Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. EDWARDS of Texas, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. AKIN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. REYES, and Mrs. TAUSCHER.
H. Res. 249: Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. TEAGUE, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. GALLEGLY.
H. Res. 251: Mr. POSEY and Mr. CASTLE.
H. Res. 252: Mr. BECERRA, Mr. NADLER of New York, Mr. FILNER, Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, Ms. SPEIER, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. HOLT, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. VISCLOSKY, and Mr. MCNERNEY.
H. Res. 267: Mr. MICA, Mr. MCNERNEY, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H. Res. 271: Ms. DELAURO and Mr. MOORE of Kansas.
H. Res. 273: Mr. SMITH of New Jersey and Ms. LEE of California.
H. Res. 274: Mrs. DAHLKEMPER and Ms. BORDALLO.

CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS, LIMITED TAX BENEFITS, OR LIMITED TARIFF BENEFITS

Under clause 9 of rule XXI, lists or statements on congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits were submitted as follows:

OFFERED BY MR. PETERSON

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Agriculture, in H.R. 1404, the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.

OFFERED BY MR. RAHALL

The provisions that warranted a referral to the Committee on Natural Resources, in H.R. 1404, the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act, do not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative GEORGE RADANOVICH to the Senate amendment to H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.

The amendment to be offered by Representative NICK RAHALL or a designee to H.R. 1404, the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act, does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of Rule XXI.