

Even if we started drilling in ANWR today, we would not see any of that oil until 2012.

Rather than drilling in the Arctic wilderness and extending our reliance on oil, we must increase fuel efficiency, diversify our sources of energy, and promote clean alternatives. We need to invest and focus on ways to reduce our consumption of oil. This is why Congressman JACK KINGSTON (R-NY) and I have introduced The Fuel Choices for American Security Act, which sets meaningful and achievable goals, all of which can be accomplished using new technologies that are already proven, effective and efficient.

I, therefore, am very pleased to learn that the Senate has struck the ANWR drilling provision from the Defense Appropriations Conference Report. It is my understanding that this bill will now pass the House by unanimous consent, and will be sent to the President for signature.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2863,
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AP-
PROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, by including the legislative provision to drill and destroy the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in this defense appropriation conference report (H.R. 2863), the Republican majority has demonstrated their on-going abuse of power, their shameless collusion with the oil industry and a distasteful willingness to exploit the needs of U.S. troops at war in Iraq and Afghanistan in order to achieve their policy desires, regardless of the cost. This is a cynical strategy to pass a provision designed for the oil industry, a provision that has already been rejected by this House earlier this year. The fact that the Republican majority is using our brave men and women serving in the armed forces as political cover to ensure that the provision allowing for oil drilling in ANWR is passed by this House shows the majority's desperation, their deception and their willingness to undermine our democratic process.

The intended purpose of this bill is to provide the resource for the defense of our nation. It is to ensure the men and women serving in the armed forces have the training, the protective gear, the equipment and all of the necessary support to execute their missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, Europe and here at home. The men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces comprise the greatest fighting force the world has ever known and they not only keep the citizens of the U.S. safe from a world filled with very real threats, they are serving the cause of peace and security around the world. I commend our troops and our military leadership for their service and sacrifice, as well as the dedication of their families.

Of the more than \$450 billion appropriated in this bill, much of the defense related expenditures are necessary for national security. I strongly support the 3.1 percent pay raise for military personnel. The allocation of more than \$7 billion for the ballistic-missile defense sys-

tem continues to be a waste for tax dollars since the program has failed many of its critical tests and by all accounts is a boondoggle.

The language in the bill that bans torture by all U.S. personnel, including civilian defense and intelligence personnel, sets the appropriate standard by which the U.S. should conduct itself—even in a war against terrorism. Senator JOHN MCCAIN should be commended for his perseverance and determination not to yield to President Bush and Vice President CHENEY's demands that torture be permitted under certain circumstances. Torture is an inhumane practice that is the antithesis of America's values and moral obligations as a defender of international human rights.

In addition to allowing drilling for oil in ANWR, this bill has a number of nondefense provisions that are objectionable. The across-the-board cut included in H.R. 2863 will total an additional \$8 billion in cuts to services critical to our families. This will result in another \$28 million cut to No Child Left Behind, bringing the total cut this year to \$1 billion. This is in addition to the \$40 billion this law has been under-funded by the Republicans since its passage.

Also included in this bill are funds to prepare for a possible Avian Flu pandemic. While I support providing funding for this work, the Republicans have included a provision providing unlimited liability protection to the pharmaceutical industry. Instead of having an honest debate about the needs of health care workers, public health systems and local governments in the case of a pandemic, Republicans have chosen only to worry about another of their strong allies—the drug companies.

H.R. 2863 also claims to provide new funding for Katrina relief which I support. However, this bill includes only \$5 billion—not nearly enough to allow families to begin to rebuild their lives and their community. And it relies on a complicated scheme of possible revenues from drilling in ANWR and sales of spectrum to fund relief. In addition, Republicans used this opportunity to push through a divisive school voucher plan that was defeated by the Education and Workforce Committee. This plan will allow \$645 million in taxpayer schools to go to private and religious schools that do not have to adhere to the accountability requirements of public schools.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support our troops. Overall, this bill however, is an example of the shameless and abusive tactics used over and over again by this Republican party to force their special interest agenda on the American people. It shows again that the Majority does not represent the values of American families, but rather values their corporate contributors. I urge my colleagues to reject this outrageous bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2005

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, due to the death of a family member, I was not present for rollcalls 665 through 671 on Sunday, December 18 and Monday, December 19. Had I been present, I would have voted

“nay” on rollcalls 666, 669, 670 and “yea” on rollcalls 665, 667, 668, and 671.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SPC RICHARD JUNIOR DE GRACIA NAPUTI

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2005

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of one of Guam's sons, SPC Richard Junior De Gracia Naputi, 24, U.S. Army, of Talofofo, Guam. Sadly, on December 20, 2005, our nation lost SPC Naputi. SPC Naputi was killed in action while serving in Taji, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Born and raised in Guam, he left the only home he knew to serve and defend his country. Assigned to the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division in Fort Benning, Georgia, SPC Naputi embodied the proud history and traditions of his unit whose motto was “Can Do” and whose lineage traces back to the Civil War.

My thoughts and prayers are with the Naputi family during this time of loss. I join his parents, Richard and Naputi, his wife Brienne, and all of Richard's extended family and friends, in mourning the loss of Richard and in honoring the dignity of his life. While the loss of SPC Naputi is painful for our entire island and our nation, he now joins that solemn fraternity of heroes who have put their country before themselves and made the greatest sacrifice. Heeding the Christmas message of “Peace on earth,” Richard's loss leads us to reflect upon the sacrifices made by the men and women who shoulder the responsibility of protecting our liberties and our freedoms. To these men and women, we owe a debt of gratitude that is simply unpayable.

During this difficult time, the people of Guam and I are keeping the Naputi family in our thoughts and prayers. I also extend my prayers to the many men and women continuing to serve around the world in the cause of freedom. God bless the Naputi family, God bless our men and women in uniform and God bless America.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF THOMAS
F. MCHUGH

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 22, 2005

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate the 37 years of public service Mr. Thomas F. McHugh has devoted to the City of Rochester. His hard work and commitment to the city's development will set an example for current and future public servants, and Rochester is grateful for all that Mr. McHugh has contributed.

Mr. McHugh grew up in Ancram, Massachusetts. His father was in the insurance business and his mother was a teacher. It was from them that he learned the importance of a strong work ethic and a responsibility to community. He carried these lessons with him as studied at University of Syracuse and moved to Rochester upon his graduation.