

and other radioactive materials from Rocky Flats. The previous Administration planned to ship the plutonium to the Savannah River site, in South Carolina. There, some of it was to be used to create mixed-oxide (MOX) fuel for commercial nuclear reactors and some was to be immobilized for disposal elsewhere.

This plan was developed to implement an international agreement under which both the United States and Russia agreed to reduce stockpiles of weapons-grade plutonium. This is an important part of our efforts to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons, which of course is so vital an aspect of our foreign and defense policies. It is also important to our national security to consolidate this surplus plutonium in one location so that it can be effectively guarded and efficiently managed—and since Rocky Flats is slated for closure, it does not make sense to keep the plutonium there.

However, the Bush Administration now has adopted a new plutonium-disposition strategy that does not include immobilization. In turn, that has prompted the Governor of South Carolina to raise objections to having plutonium shipped to that State. The Governor has gone into federal court to prevent that from happening—and as a result, shipments of plutonium from Rocky Flats have been delayed.

Other legislation has been introduced that addresses issues raised in that lawsuit, and the bill I am introducing today does not focus on them—it focuses only on the cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats.

That is because while Coloradans may differ about some things, we all agree that a prompt and effective cleanup and closure of the Rocky Flats site is a matter of highest priority for our state—and we are all concerned that the shipments of plutonium, originally scheduled to begin last fall, are not yet underway. We are worried that unless those shipments begin soon the DOE will be unable to achieve its goal of completing the cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats by 2006.

That is why I was disappointed last week when the House's Republican leadership refused to even allow consideration of including in the defense authorization bill a simple statement of the importance of a timely cleanup. That is why I think it is now essential to act to protect Colorado's interests in case DOE does not soon overcome obstacles to removal of the Rocky Flats plutonium. And that is the purpose of the bill I am introducing today.

The bill is intended to make it more likely that DOE will have the ability and the incentive to meet the 2006 cleanup goal. It provides that if shipments of the Rocky Flats plutonium under the current disposition plan have not begun by July 1 of this year, DOE will be required to examine alternative plans and to report on those alternatives within 6 months. And if shipments have not been completed by November 1 of next year, as called for in current cleanup plans, DOE would be required to compensate Colorado at the rate of \$1 million per day—up to \$100 million per year—until all the Rocky Flats plutonium has been removed.

These deadlines were not selected arbitrarily. It is essential that the plutonium now stored at Rocky Flats be removed by the fall of next year so DOE can accomplish other essential cleanup work that must be done in order to achieve a 2006 closure. If the plutonium stays at Rocky Flats too long, DOE runs the risk of missing other cleanup and closure milestones and of failing to live up to its com-

mitments to Colorado. That is also why there is an immediate need to explore other alternative locations to which the plutonium can be sent. DOE did look at other alternatives before selecting the South Carolina site, so I think a new examination of alternatives would not take very long, but it must be done soon for DOE to stay on schedule at Rocky Flats.

Admittedly, this is strong medicine. But I think strong medicine is required in this case, because this is a matter of such great importance to the country and particularly to Colorado.

In drafting this bill, I cannot claim great originality. The requirement for a consideration of alternatives is based on legislation that Senator WAYNE ALLARD, Colorado's junior Senator has proposed, and the idea of a \$1 million-per-day incentive is based on legislation introduced by our colleague, Representative LINDSEY GRAHAM to protect the interests of South Carolina. My purpose in shaping this proposal was not to be innovative, but to develop legislation that would protect Colorado's interests and advance the national interest in reducing our stockpile of weapons-grade plutonium.

Mr. Speaker, I have supported DOE's efforts to achieve an effective cleanup of Rocky Flats, closure of the site, and its transformation into a National Wildlife Refuge before the end of 2006. I have done so because I have considered that to be in the national interest as well as the interests of all Coloradans—and of that I am still convinced. The bill I am introducing today reflects my continuing determination to do all I can to see that DOE will continue to press forward to achieve those goals.

SEMINOLE HIGH SCHOOL
RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Seminole High School in Gaines County, Texas for winning the 2002 University Interscholastic League Class AAA State Academic Championship. Students from Seminole High School proved themselves superior to students from throughout the state of Texas at the UIL one-act play and academic meet competition earlier this month. Seminole High School earned 119½ points, which was 10½ points higher than its closest competitor.

Seminole High School has performed well during the state UIL competitions in past. The school won first place in the state competition in 1993 and 1994. Students of Seminole High School won runner-up honors in 1995 and 2001. The UIL competition requires students to prove their skills and knowledge in a wide range of studies, including mathematics, science, writing, reading and interpretation. Students also must perform a one-act play.

Students at Seminole High School have accomplished a commendable achievement. The students' success in statewide competition reflects highly on their dedication to academic excellence, and it reflects highly on their teachers and administrators to whom their education has been entrusted. It is with great pride that I recognize the Seminole High School students competing in the 2002 UIL

competition in Class AAA for their tremendous accomplishment.

Children's academic successes are crucial to our nation's continued growth and prosperity, and students at Seminole High School seem poised to serve this country well. I am proud to represent such a high achieving academic institution as Seminole High School.

HONORING HEBRON BAPTIST
CHURCH "HIS KIDS 'N' COM-
PANY" DACULA, GEORGIA

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 15, 2002

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, there are a select group of people who reach out to make the world a better place, and truly make an impact on our lives. These folks keep us aware of what it means to be an American, what our values are and should remain; and keep us ever mindful of the many sacrifices made by courageous Americans to insure future generations enjoy our many freedoms.

Hebron Baptist Church in Dacula, Georgia, not only spreads the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, they are ever mindful of teaching patriotism and the importance of our nation's freedom to openly express the words, "In God We Trust."

I was privileged recently to witness a musical play entitled, "In God We Trust," starring the children of Hebron Baptist Church, "His Kids 'N' Company." It was an excellent portrayal of how important it is to us as a nation to protect ourselves from those who would prefer to abolish from all public view, the words "In God We Trust." The play portrayed the development of our nation, from the ships leaving Europe filled with pilgrims searching for religious freedom, to the many sacrifices made by generations of our citizens in order to maintain such freedom; as well as the attacks being made today to abolish open expression of belief in God.

It was an outstanding musical play with a very serious message, and the "kids" were successful in their effort, not only to get the message across of what being an American patriot is all about, but they truly touched the hearts of everyone in attendance. I believe there is no place more fitting to recognize and honor this most patriotic musical play and its participants, than in the House of Representatives—the very seat of our nation's government.

I wish each of you could have the opportunity to witness this outstanding production, which was created by Jeff Brockelman; with music by Chris and Diane Machen; and script by Jeff Brockelman and Sharon Thorne.

I ask my fellow members to join in congratulating Larry Wynn, Senior Pastor of Hebron Baptist Church; John Williams, Music Ministry Assistant; Billy Britt, Pastor of Church Growth and Institute Training; Pam Turner, Director of the Children's Choir; and Jackie McFarland, Music Ministry Assistant. A special congratulations is in order to all those who were directly involved with the musical play, along with "His Kids 'N' Company" who performed superbly.