

certainly a lot of the water bottles, even articles of clothing. It is a place of enormous trash and human waste, as a matter of fact. This also gets into the water on the ranch when, after a rain, it destroys the wells; it becomes something that the cattle cannot drink.

The trucks and the buildings on this gentleman's property, as well as many people in the area, have been vandalized. The grasslands needed for food for the cattle are continually trampled by the aliens crossing and making new paths across the land. They discard, as I say, water bottles and trash and plastic bags. The cattle eat the plastic bags and die.

Recently, Mrs. Barnett, Barbara, was driving her truck near her home and saw three illegal aliens crossing her farm. She called her husband, and he and his brother came out and tried to locate them. After following the trail for a period of time, they found a stash of 220 pounds of marijuana hidden in the mesquite bushes.

The Border Patrol has told him that some part of his land is used every single night by drug traffickers, but the Border Patrol does not have the manpower to stop it. Lately, these illegal groups have been coming closer to his ranch house using a creek bed hiding spot not 100 yards from his home. A few months ago, he found a group of 30 and called the Border Patrol to come and get them.

This is happening day after day after day to the people who live in this area. This is not a unique story. I identify these people as homeland heroes, because they are fighting a war on their own land, on their own property, and on the border of the United States; and they are doing it certainly without the help of this government. They turn to their own government, to the Federal Government and say, what can you do? How can you help? What is happening to our property and to our lives? Our lives are essentially being destroyed.

They have to travel everywhere armed. They keep a rifle by the door, a loaded rifle by the door in almost every one of these houses up here because of the number of vandals that have come in, the number of times they have personally been threatened. People have been accosted. Their cars have been stolen, hijacked. The illegal aliens will put rocks up on the dirt road, stop the vehicles, and then hijack the vehicles.

Again, this is something that they put up with every single day. Madam Speaker, what would we do if that was the way we had to face every single day of our lives? I mean, would we not turn to somebody for help and say, what is going on here? This is incredible. This is, by the way, a relatively recent phenomenon, maybe 4 or 5 years. It is a result of a whole lot of things, including the fact that the Mexican Government has chosen to help move people into the United States illegally to serve some of their own needs in the country, Mexico, that is to say.

These are travesties, Madam Speaker, and they cannot be justified in any

way, shape, or form. These people are homeland heroes. I want to bring them to the attention of my colleagues, and I will continue to do so.

#### SUPPORT VOTING RIGHTS LEGISLATION FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I have introduced a D.C. voting rights bill here in the House, and in the Senate it has been introduced by Senator LIEBERMAN with seven sponsors besides Mr. LIEBERMAN; Mr. FEINGOLD, Ms. FEINSTEIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. DODD, Mr. KENNEDY, and Ms. LANDRIEU. I will be seeking cosponsors here in the House from both sides of the aisle beginning next week, and I will be seeking it on this eve of war. I am asking Members of the House to consider what it means to send people to war when those same people have no vote in the House and no Senators whatsoever. We, of course, are second per capita in Federal income taxes. Unless one comes from Connecticut, your constituents do not pay as much in Federal income tax as we do. Most of our residents pay income taxes.

The difference this year is that we are emphasizing something that most of our residents and most of my colleagues' residents have not had to do. On the eve of war, we honor 50,000 veterans of the District of Columbia who live here now. Three distinguished veterans who are also Washingtonians stood with me to announce that we are introducing the No Taxation Without Representation Act. They were former Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander, Harvard College, Yale Law School; Wesley Brown, a native Washingtonian, the first black person ever to graduate from the Naval Academy. He is also a graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic, served in Korea in World War II, and is the former chair of my Service Academy Nominating Board that nominates young people from the District, selects people from the District for me to nominate to go to the academies. George Keyes, native Washingtonian, Air Force Academy, Yale Law School, Rhodes Scholar, just finished as chair of my nominating board for the service academies.

The present Chair, Kerwin Miller, was to be here. A West Point graduate, he could not attend for a completely outrageous reason. The House has attached a rider that forbids anybody who happens to be an employee of the District government from lobbying for voting rights. This man is head of the D.C. Veterans Affairs Office. What an outrage, Madam Speaker. This veteran, this West Point graduate, could not come here to plead for his own freedom because of a rider that has been attached to an appropriations bill that

should not even be here in the first place because it consists of money raised in the District of Columbia.

The Revolutionary War "Taxation without Representation" slogan has been with us since District residents fought in that war and have fought in every war since. The people I represent have indeed had more casualties in many wars than many others in this House. In World War I, more casualties than three States; in World War II, more casualties than four States; in Korea, more casualties than eight States; and in Vietnam, more casualties than 10 States. And no vote, Madam Speaker.

Since I have been in the House, three wars have taken place: the Persian Gulf War, Afghanistan, and now we are on the verge of war with Iraq. I have spoken at all three, sent all three off to war, all with no vote.

Madam Speaker, it is one thing to give your taxes to your government without a vote. It is quite another to lay your life on the line for your country without a vote.

Everyone in the military today is a volunteer. There is a freeze so one cannot even get out, making it really a draft. Taxes without a vote in return is awful, particularly in this body that does not want people to pay taxes in the everyday sense of the word. But patriotism without a vote for it is a shame and a shame on us, particularly given the kind of war we now want to fight, a war for democracy in Iraq and in the Middle East.

I am pleased that there are Republicans who have said to me, This is wrong and I am not for it.

Voting is not a partisan issue, except in undemocratic countries. It cannot be a partisan issue in our country today when we are sending young men and women off to war, yes, even from the Nation's Capital. So the people I represent, in whose name I submitted this bill today, standing with three veterans who live in the District of Columbia, I ask this question of this House: how much longer are you going to ask the residents of your Nation's Capital, 600,000 of them, to pay taxes more than most of my colleagues do per capita and to go to war without the right to vote? How long? I hope not very long.

#### SUPPORT H.R. 5

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, today I rise to commend the House on the passage of H.R. 5 and to encourage the other body to immediately take up meaningful medical liability reform, the lack of which constitutes the number one health care problem in America today.

Doctors are being driven out of their practices by staggering medical liability insurance premiums, a direct result

of the incredible increase in medical liability lawsuits and the mind-boggling sums of money paid in jury awards and settlements, much of which ends up in the pockets of personal injury trial attorneys.

In the last 10 years in Texas, my home State, we have seen a 500 percent increase in medical liability awards. But the money is not going to the injured. Studies show that 57 percent of medical malpractice premiums go towards attorneys' fees. Frivolous lawsuits have caused professional liability premiums to jump anywhere from 50 percent to 200 percent in Texas, and the amazing fact is that most of these suits are frivolous. In fact, more than three out of four liability claims against Texas doctors are simply dismissed, dismissed for no merit. Yet, in all cases, doctors are forced to spend tens of thousands of dollars to defend themselves.

Because of the skyrocketing cost of insurance, many physicians are simply closing their doors, moving away from high-risk specialties, refusing to perform certain medical procedures or, frankly, taking early retirement. For example, in Mexia, Texas, in my district, the regional hospital had four family practitioners 1 year ago. But because of the increased costs of their liability insurance, three doctors are now lost. This will leave the hospital with only one OB-GYN in a service area of 70,000 people.

Madam Speaker, this is unacceptable. In this same town in my district, another practitioner closed her clinic and ended up filing bankruptcy, principally due to the skyrocketing cost of liability insurance.

Madam Speaker, I fear without meaningful reform we will lose the best and brightest. They will avoid or exit the medical profession altogether, and where are we going to be 10 years from now if we do not have enough quality doctors to serve our patients?

I know personally how important it is to have the best and brightest practicing medicine. One year ago, our first child was born, a daughter we named Claire Suzanne; and I honestly believe she is the most beautiful baby in the world. But there was a point last year when I was not certain she would be with us, because after almost 12 hours of labor, at 4:30 a.m. in the morning, our baby was in a breech position, apparently undeliverable. Losing her heartbeat with every contraction of my wife, the atmosphere in the delivery room turned very serious. Fortunately, due to a greatly skilled OB-GYN, an immediate C-section was performed in time to save our precious child's life. I do not want to contemplate what might have happened to my child or what could happen to someone else's child if the best and brightest are no longer there to practice medicine and save lives.

There are further problems, Madam Speaker. Doctors are being forced to practice defensive medicine just to pro-

tect themselves from being sued, ordering extra tests, invasive procedures and medications that they do not believe are medically necessary. Hospitals, doctors, and nurses are reluctant to provide care, even in emergency situations, because they live in fear of lawsuits. As one of my House colleagues recently noted, "Something is wrong with the system when it is easier to sue a doctor than it is to see one."

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Madam Speaker, we know that there are 40 million people in this country without health insurance. Most simply cannot afford it. But for every 1 percent increase in individual health care premiums, 300,000 people nationwide are forced to go without medical insurance.

Madam Speaker, the answer to a medical tragedy or a grossly negligent medical act is not to pay personal injury trial lawyers millions of dollars, it is not to drive up the costs of health care for the rest of us, it is not to add more Americans to the ranks of the uninsured. The simple answer is to pull the license of the grossly negligent physician.

Madam Speaker, medical liability reform as we passed today will lower cost, improve quality, and provide more access to health care for all Americans.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Chair would remind Members not to urge Senate action.

#### RECALL DESIGNEE

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

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER, HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, March 13, 2003.  
Hon. JEFF TRANDAHL,  
Clerk, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CLERK: Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 1, and also for purposes of such concurrent resolutions of the current Congress as may contemplate my designation of Members to act in similar circumstances, I hereby designate Representative Tom DeLay of Texas to act jointly with the Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, in the event of my death or inability, to notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, or any reassembly under any such concurrent resolution. In the event of the death or inability of that designee, the alternate Members of the House listed in the letter bearing this date that I have placed with the Clerk are designated, in turn, for the same purposes.

Sincerely,

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

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

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

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time allocated to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

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

There was no objection.

#### AMERICA BETTER WAKE UP

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, as we inch closer to Mr. Bush's unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Iraq, I come to the floor to talk about an issue that I think the American people should be aware of and Members of House should be very concerned about, and that is the type of news coverage they get about this war.

I see in today's Roll Call that the Republicans are setting up a spin room that will be briefings from the White House on a regular basis, but it is only on one side. It is all being coordinated through the gentleman from California (Mr. COX).

Now, in addition to that the question is then about reporters, and there are going to be two kinds of reporters in this war. The first are the embedded reporters. Those are the American reporters who are brought in and put in military uniforms and put in units of the military. They will be under constant censorship by the leadership of the unit that they are with. They have to sign an agreement to that effect. It is called the Coalition Forces Land Component Ground Rules Agreement, and that means they cannot write anything that the commander of that unit does not say is all right to go out.

Now it is pretty clear that the Secretary of War, Mr. Rumsfeld, is trying to deal with the problems of the Vietnam War. The press played an enormous role in stopping that war by reporting what is going on over there. Had there not been free press, there is no telling how long it might have gone on because the official reports were all bogus and we now know it. But, in the last couple of wars we have controlled the press, and this is the real best control I have ever seen.

There is a second kind of reporter, and that is the unembedded reporter, the international reporters. There is an article in today's paper from the Irish radio, an interview with a woman by the name of Kate Adie, who is the chief news correspondent for the BBC. She said when asked if there were any consequences of fatal actions, the Pentagon officers said we do not care. They have been warned, stay out of