

funding. This is where it belongs, as Guam and the insular areas should have parity with the States.

Passage of S. 811 will also eliminate a regulatory hurdle that prevents Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas from participating in the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program. Inclusion in the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program will allow the insular areas to apply for low-interest government-backed loans to build large projects such as bridges, schools and other projects designed to develop human, natural and capital resources to stimulate economic development.

Section 108 was a legislative priority of mine, prompting me to introduce H.R. 2422, the Insular Areas Community Development Act. Thanks to the kind support of Congresswoman HARRIS, as well as the helpful assistance of the Financial Services Committee leadership and staff, this longstanding issue for Guam and the insular areas will finally be resolved with the passage of S. 811.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of S. 811.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2673,
CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment that the omnibus appropriations package before us, H.R. 2673, does not include provisions passed by both houses of Congress to protect workers' overtime pay, nor does it extend the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) program.

Mr. Speaker, here we are again, the holiday season is upon us and once more, it is time to buy presents for our loved ones. Whether we are celebrating Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanzaa or simply the holiday season, it is a time for sharing gifts, festive meals and caring for others. Unfortunately, the appropriations package before us will strip workers of their overtime rights and does not extend TEUC benefits, possibly resulting in Santa Claus not making stops at everyone's house next year.

Millions of families continue to struggle through the rough fringes of our economy. Currently the official U.S. unemployment rate is at 5.9 percent, representing more than 8.5 million unemployed workers, and the rate for Hispanics has moved up to 7.4 percent. As much as these can be seen as mere figures, we must realize that they are more than just numbers. They represent human beings: someone who needs work and whose family may need food and clothing. These are not luxuries; they are the essentials.

Too many Americans are going to wake up New Year's morning to find out that their unemployment insurance has run dry. In the past 2 years, we've seen some 3 million jobs disappear.

Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity to extend the reauthorization of the TEUC program and we failed to do it.

I joined the efforts to extend those benefits so that working families still looking for jobs

can enter the New Year with some peace of mind. The leadership in this House, however, saw it differently and blocked our efforts to extend help to out-of-work Americans. They reportedly said the economy's doing so much better that unemployed workers don't need any extra help. Sadly, this failure not only hurts families but also the economy. Worse yet, it comes just a few weeks after these same leaders approved a \$12 billion handout to insurance companies.

That's not all. Even those who are fortunate to have jobs have come under attack by the leadership of this House. On March 31, 2003, the Bush administration proposed changes to the overtime pay rules that require additional pay for workers who put in more than 40 hours per week. These changes will impact up to 8 million employees who could find themselves working longer without any additional pay.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity to include provisions in this massive appropriations package to ensure that the rights of over 8 million workers to receive overtime for their hard work were protected, and we failed.

The new rules will impact workers who make between \$22,101 and \$65,000 per year. These middle class workers, from journalists to medical technicians, often rely on the extra money they get from overtime and appreciate there being some limit on the time they are expected to work.

Congress voted to stop this change in labor policy, though the vote was particularly close. Despite this action from Congress, the Bush administration has continued to push for the changes. The President even issued a veto threat against this massive appropriations bill if it included any attempt to maintain the overtime protections for these workers and their families.

As we enter the holiday season, it's sad that there's so little compassion for Americans struggling to find jobs and make ends meet. Clearly, the battle for America's working families is not over.

THE PHILADELPHIA CONFERENCE
ENTITLED "PARTNERSHIP FOR
PROSPERITY AND SECURITY"

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, converting Cold War military technology to serve peaceful purposes was the subject of a conference which took place last month in my State of Pennsylvania. Taking place in Philadelphia, the conference was entitled "Partnership for Prosperity & Security" and was hosted by U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and his Russian counterpart, Minister Alexander Rumyantsev. As the op-ed below by Kempton Jenkins describes, it was a showcase of new technology products in fields ranging from energy, nanotechnology and healthcare to detection technologies for counter-terrorism. It was an important demonstration of the power of cooperation between our two countries and I recommend the article to my colleagues.

[From American/Russian Business Today,
Dec. 2003]

"GUNS TO PLOWSHARES" AND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION: THE U.S.-RUSSIAN PARTNERSHIP

(By Kempton Jenkins)

While developments in Iraq dominate headlines and newscasts, the threat to civilization itself of nuclear proliferation is both real and urgent. Diplomatic collaboration between Moscow and Washington in dealing with North Korea and Iran is central to containing this threat. In the long-run, cooperation between the United States and Russia in harnessing our huge Cold War stockpiles (and the brain power which produced them) is the only way to remove this threat to both of us and the rest of the world.

Last month in Philadelphia U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and his Russian counterpart, Minister Alexander Rumyantsev, chaired a conference entitled "Partnership for Prosperity & Security." It was dedicated to accelerating cooperation between Russia and the U.S. on proliferation policy and promoting the continued conversion of military-industrial capacity to serve peaceful purposes. Dramatic progress, largely unnoticed publicly, has already been accomplished. At the conference, Secretary Abraham and Minister Rumyantsev announced important new initiatives.

The Philadelphia conference drew attention to a number of health-related products that are byproducts of the bilateral effort to convert military technologies to civilian uses. The event was a showcase of new technologies from Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan to potential U.S. industry partners and financiers. The conference's exhibition hall displayed 100 high-technology products ready for commercialization in fields ranging from energy (coal, oil, gas, nuclear and fuel cell) and radio pharmaceuticals to aerospace, nanotechnology and detection technologies for counter-terrorism.

The U.S. Department of Energy, in collaboration with U.S. Industry Coalition, has already helped form more than 100 commercial partnerships between U.S. companies and Russian, Ukrainian, and Kazakhstan institutes and private companies to bring new (and heretofore inaccessible technologies) to the global market. In 1991, a small New Mexico engineering company recognized the commercial potential in a Russian radar technology and embarked on a successful partnership to develop applications in energy and land mine detection. With a team of more than 100 weapons scientists and engineers in the Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod, Stolar Horizon has developed "Horizon Sensor" radar mapping, a technique allowing cleaner, more efficient access to coal, methane gas and oil. The same technology is being developed for humanitarian purposes by Stolar Horizon and SPEKTR Conversia in the closed nuclear city of Snezhinsk. The "EDIT" detector is able to locate both metal and plastic land mines—an urgently needed tool in the global effort to find and disable tens of thousands of land mines.

Persons confined to wheelchairs due to disease or accidents are susceptible to pressure ulcers—painful, sometimes-deadly infections caused by lack of circulation and motion. Health care costs associated with treatment are estimated at \$8 billion in the U.S. alone. Numotech, a small California medical devices firm with an FDA-approved automated wheelchair seat cushion proven to prevent these sores, was facing significant engineering production problems when the company was introduced to the Russian SPEKTR Conversia in 1999. Today the resulting U.S.-Russian partnership is planning the launch

next year of the "Generic Total Contact Seat," with components engineered and manufactured in Russia.

Needle-free injections are performed for mass inoculations and immunizations, but they also pose the risk of spreading disease. With decades of experience in needle-less technology, scientists at the medical research group of the Voronezh missile plant in Russia developed a disposable cap with an impermeable membrane. Their paper about this development caught the attention of Felton International, an animal injection company in Lenexa, Kansas, which is now in partnership with CADB MedEquipment to manufacture the "Pulse 2000" injector for animal use and human clinical trials in the U.S.

Just as the expanding U.S.-Russian partnership is replacing military-industrial confrontation with peaceful product development, there is reason for optimism that Russo-American collaboration can also prevail over the threat of nuclear conflagration in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 677, for personal reasons, due to my illness, I was unable to be in the Chamber when the time elapsed on the vote.

Had I been able to vote, I would have voted "no" on the motion that House Resolution 474 be laid on the table.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN JOE SKEEN

SPEECH OF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to pay tribute to former Congressman Skeen of New Mexico, who passed away this week after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. Joe was a good friend and a dedicated public servant, and we will miss him terribly.

Joe Skeen was a gentleman in the finest sense of the word. He treated everyone with respect and offered his friendship to all. The entire Congress would agree that Joe's character was of the highest quality. He had a wonderful sense of humor.

Joe was a man of his district. Born and raised in New Mexico, he understood and worked for rural America. A sheep and cattle rancher, he understood the needs of his district—including schools, utilities, health care, and the many other particular requirements of a rural area—and he always fought to meet those needs. His attention to his district is just part of why his constituents made him the longest-serving Member of the House of Representatives from New Mexico.

It was my good fortune to serve with Joe on the Appropriations Committee, where he served as the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Interior. It was on the Appropriations Committee that I learned how special he was.

Throughout the often difficult process of writing and passing Appropriations bills, Joe was always known for his fairness and civility. He listened to his colleagues and tried to respond to their needs.

Since his retirement last year, we have missed Joe in the Congress. He always put his country ahead of party and desired accomplishments for the American people most of all. He cared about the House of Representatives as an institution and about bipartisanship as a noble part of our work here. He elevated the character of the House of Representatives, and we are so grateful for his service here.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Mary, and their two children, Elisa and Mikell. I hope it is a comfort to them that so many people share their loss and are praying for them at this sad time.

RECOGNIZING THE POTLATCH CORPORATION

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition to the Potlatch Corporation. The Potlatch Corporation, one of the nation's oldest forest products companies, is currently celebrating its centennial year.

Founded in 1903 as Potlatch Lumber Co., the company built its first sawmill in 1906 at a location in North Idaho where Native American celebrations of gift giving and goodwill known as "potlatches" had been held. Today, the Potlatch Corporation is an integrated forest products company with 1.5 million acres of timberland in Idaho, Minnesota and Arkansas, and a hybrid poplar plantation in Oregon. The company's 14 manufacturing operations in Idaho, Minnesota, Arkansas, and Nevada produce lumber, plywood, oriented strand board, particleboard, bleached pulp, paperboard and private label consumer tissue products.

The Potlatch Corporation has earned a national reputation for progressive land management practices and innovative products that efficiently utilize wood resources. Potlatch continues its strong tradition of efficient wood fiber utilization, while supplying customers around the world with quality products and service.

Although recent years have brought many challenges to the domestic wood and paper industry, Potlatch remains competitive in the global market. From its roots in North Idaho, Potlatch has blossomed into an industry leader, and it continues to be a strong contributor to the economy of North Idaho. I wish to congratulate the Potlatch Corporation on a hundred years of success, and I look forward to its continued growth and vitality.

IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION COSTS

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am inserting into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a copy of a letter we sent to National Security Advisor

Condoleezza Rice on October 29, 2003, regarding these issues. I am also inserting recent data from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on November 17, 2003, providing a breakdown of Halliburton's charge of \$2.64 per gallon. This data shows that Halliburton is charging the U.S. taxpayer \$1.17 per gallon for fuel and \$1.21 per gallon for transport, as well as \$0.02 per gallon for "other" charges, and \$0.24 per gallon in "markups" that go directly to Halliburton.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, October 29, 2003.

Hon. CONDOLEEZZA RICE,

Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. RICE: We have learned that the U.S. government is paying enormous sums for gasoline imported into Iraq from Kuwait. We are writing to learn why this is happening and what can be done to stop this waste of taxpayer dollars.

Here are the facts:

1. As of October 19, 2003, Halliburton has imported 61,304,091 gallons of gasoline from Kuwait into Iraq. Halliburton has been paid \$162,503,305 for this gasoline, for an average price of \$2.65 per gallon.

2. The \$2.65 per gallon price is grossly excessive. Experts we consulted stated that the total price for buying and transporting gasoline into Iraq should be less than \$1.00 per gallon. They estimated the price to buy gasoline in the region at 71 cents per gallon, and they estimated transportation costs at less than 25 cents per gallon, for a total per-gallon price of about 96 cents.

3. The Iraqi oil company, SOMO, is currently paying 97 cents per gallon to import gasoline from Kuwait to Iraq. Even Halliburton has charged only \$1.22 per gallon to import gasoline from Turkey into Iraq.

4. The gasoline imported from Kuwait is sold inside Iraq for just 4 to 15 cents per gallon. Although Iraq has the second richest oil reserves in the world, the U.S. government is subsidizing over 95% of the cost of gasoline consumed by Iraqis.

We have heard different possible explanation for the exorbitant cost of the gasoline. One is that Halliburton is paying inflated prices in order to receive favorable consideration for other projects. Another is that the Bush Administration is responsible and, in effect, is using Halliburton as a vehicle for moving funds.

We do not know if either of these explanation is accurate. But we do know that U.S. taxpayers are not getting their money's worth. The U.S. government is paying nearly three times more for gasoline from Kuwait than it should, and then it is reselling this gasoline at a huge loss inside Iraq. Whether this is due to incompetence, malfeasance, or some other reason, the waste of taxpayer dollars must be stopped.

We cannot understand the refusal by the Administration to respond to our previous requests for information. We have written the White House twice to express our concerns about how taxpayer dollars are being spent in Iraq. But the White House has refused to address the matter. The signal that this sends is that the Administration either has no explanation or does not care about squandering taxpayer dollars.

Three weeks ago, you were given responsibilities for coordinating Iraqi reconstruction efforts. We are therefore writing to you to seek answers to the following basic questions:

What is the justification for paying \$2.65 per gallon to import gasoline from Kuwait into Iraq?

What is the jurisdiction for selling this gasoline for only 4 to 15 cents per gallon inside Iraq?