United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, FIRSTSESSION

Vol. 151 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2005 No. 52

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 26, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM PRICE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

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

LEMELSON FOUNDATION AND INTRODUCTION OF WATER FOR THE POOR ACT OF 2005

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last Friday evening I had the opportunity and the honor of attending a ceremony where the Lemelson Foundation awarded the annual Lemelson MIT Prize for Innovation, held for the first time in Portland, Oregon.

The foundation was established by one of the most prolific American inventors, the late Jerome Lemelson, and his family.

Although located in Portland, the foundation is truly international in scope. Jerome Lemelson endowed the foundation to promote innovation and to ensure that its application benefited humankind.

In the United States, their unique foundation supports several grantees whose programs celebrate extraordinary inventors as role models, illustrate the value of invention in the evolution of a great society, and nurture young adults to solve pressing social problems by pursuing careers in invention.

This year the foundation awarded a $500,000 Lemelson-MIT Prize, the largest cash award for innovation, to Elwood ''Woody'' Norris for revolutionizing acoustics.

Internationally, the Lemelson Foundation nurtures individual creativity to transform fundamental challenges into opportunities for sustainable progress. Its Invention for Sustainable Development program recognizes inventors and innovators in developing countries, fostering the institutions that support them, and applies their inventions to meet basic human needs and advance sustainable development.

Last week, foundation board member Eric Lemelson discussed foundation initiatives dealing with low-tech, high-impact innovation dealing with drip irrigation, an example of a cost-effective application of new technology to save scarce water resources, save money in a developing country while improving agricultural yields.

This is the type of commonsense approach of applied technology to sustainability that can truly transform people's lives.

I would hope that we in government can undertake the same spirit of innovation in our approach to USAID.

I was pleased to see Senator FRIST return from his trip to Africa convinced that the United States needs to do more with water innovation and has introduced legislation in the Senate. I applaud his bill, the Safe Water Currency for Peace Act, S. 492. By the same token, I am offering complementary legislation in the House, the Water for the Poor Act of 2005.

This bill will make access to clean water and sanitation a major U.S. foreign policy objective and requires the USAID to develop a strategy to carry out this objective. It supports innovative financing mechanisms that can create additional resources for water and sanitation, while ensuring access and affordability to the very poor.

This legislation is critically needed. The lack of clean water and sanitation is perhaps the world's greatest single health need. More than 1 billion people worldwide lack access to safe drinking water. More than twice as many, 2.3 billion people, one in every three people on the planet, lack access to adequate sanitation, and the consequences are devastating.

Water-related diseases are a human tragedy, killing up to 5 million people every year. At any given time, half the population in the developing world is sick from water-related disease. Tragically, one child dies every 15 seconds for lack of water and sanitation.

At a time when people in every corner of the globe understand the importance of water and the problems of its misuse, I was pleased that the United States and the Bush administration joined 185 other nations committed to cutting in half the percentage of people in the world without access to water and sanitation. I was there in Johannesburg in 2002, watching that consensus come together. I am hopeful that we will be able to follow through.

As Eric Lemelson pointed out in his remarks, the Lemelson Foundation does not have to be responsive to shareholders or the voters so they can afford to be cutting-edge, innovative, and creative. I would like to think that they are pointing the way to more liveable communities around the globe where all our families can be safe,

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healthy, and more economically secure; and they are pointing the way for the Federal Government to follow their lead.

My congratulations to the foundation; and I look forward to working on their innovations, integrating them with U.S. Government policy around the globe.

WHY THE F/A–22 RAPTOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, recently I had the opportunity to visit Langley Air Force Base in Virginia and spend time with the commander of the Air Combat Command, Lieutenant General William Fraser, and many dedicated, indeed dedicated, members of the United States Air Force. As part of the Air Force Caucus trip, we had almost 50 people participating in the trip.

Much of this trip focused on the F/A–22 Raptor and its importance to the future of the United States Air Force. After visiting with General Fraser and seeing the Raptor up close, I am more convinced and I think the participants who went on this trip are also convinced that the F/A–22 will become an integral part of future military successes.

Mr. Speaker, during my visit I was briefed not only about the warfighting capabilities of this plane but about the maintenance program as well. The Air Force uses cutting-edge technology to maintain this plane; and this, of course, leads to more efficient maintenance. It is the first jet to use an entirely paperless maintenance program, allowing new parts to be ordered or changes to be made significantly faster.

The engine also utilizes new technologies. Its design allows it to be worked on while still on the plane, that is, the engine. In the past, engines often needed to be removed in order to be maintained. This is not the case for the F/A–22. These new technologies mean less time in the shop and, of course, more time in the air.

Also, the maintenance training program has been improved. No longer are there these big, bulky maintenance manuals. The training is digital in real-time, with real-world conditions. It leads to more effective and efficient training. Maintainers spend less time in training and more time actually working on the plane. This, of course, leads to faster maintenance and thus the F/A–22s are not grounded for longer than is necessary.

In the past, and particularly in the post-September 11 environment, homeland security has been our top priority here in Congress and our Nation. The F/A–22 plays a large role in protecting the homeland. According to the Air Force, 238 legacy fighters would be required and needed to protect this homeland while only 150 F/A–22s would be needed.

The Bush administration unfortunately has proposed cutting $10 billion from the F/A–22 program over the next 5 years, leaving enough to buy 183 of the 381 planes the Air Force says it needs. Simply put, in my judgment, this number is just not sufficient.

The Air Force will not be able to guarantee air superiority without a sufficient quantity of F/A–22s. The U.S. has not lost a soldier due to an air attack since 1952. The Air Force has made air superiority look so easy that we have begun to take it for granted, but maintaining this air dominance is not easy.

For now, the United States Air Force is the best trained, the best equipped in the world; but Russia, China, India have made huge strides in achieving parity, and, in some cases, have even surpassed U.S. capabilities.

Our current, but badly aging, fighters no longer enjoy technological or aerodynamic superiority when compared to the modern aircraft of potential adversaries. There have been some recent exercises pitting the F–15s, which the F/A–22 Raptor will replace, against one of Russia's primary export fighters, resulting in kill ratios favoring the SU–30.

In contrast, on a recent training mission where a single F/A–22 went against five F–15s, the Raptor killed all the F–15s within 3 minutes. Additionally, due to a lack of stealth assets, the ability of our aircraft to operate in environments where hostile threats exist is inadequate. The only way to address these shortcomings, which will only worsen, I tell my colleagues, is with sufficient numbers of the F/A–22 Raptor. We cannot fight tomorrow's war with yesterday's equipment.

That is why America needs the Raptor. With a variety of internal weapons, the Raptor can destroy or negate the most capable future threats: advance fighters; surface-to-air missile systems; and high-value, mobile ground targets.

The F/A–22's combination of speed, stealth, and integrated avionics bring unmatched capabilities to cope with the 21st-century threat environment. Air dominance gives the joint force freedom from attack, freedom to maneuver and, of course, freedom to succeed. No substitute exists for the F/A–22's unique capabilities.

With the international proliferation of sophisticated aircraft and air defense systems, U.S. fighters are losing their ability to leverage access for U.S. forces in hostile regions. The F/A–22 changes this equation with its revolutionary design and potent array of systems.

Mr. Speaker, that is why we need to fully fund the F/A–22 Raptor over the next 5 years.

ETHICS CHANGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the year, the House has been conducting its business without an organized Committee on Standards of Official Conduct in place to investigate possible unethical behavior by Members of Congress. Republicans have tried to blame Democrats on the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for this standoff, but the fact is they have nobody to blame but themselves.

At the beginning of this year, the Republican leadership went ahead and changed the way the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct does its business. In the past, whenever ethics changes were being considered, they were addressed in a bipartisan fashion, with both Democrats and Republicans at the table. That is the only way ethics reform can honestly be addressed, but the Republican leadership ignored that protocol and strong-armed enough of its Members into passing new and weakened ethics rules.

The American people need to understand that these new rules will allow either party, Democrat or Republican, to protect its own Members. Under the new Republican rules, if the majority of the committee cannot determine whether or not an investigation should proceed, after 45 days of receiving a complaint, the complaint would simply be dropped. No action would take place.

Since the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is made up of five Members from each party, either side could prevent an ethics investigation from moving forward against one of its Members. Now, this is not the way the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is supposed to work. Under the old bipartisan rules, if the committee could not come to an agreement on how to proceed after 45 days, an investigative subcommittee was created.

The weakening of the ethics rules by House Republicans did not fool editorial writers, both liberal and conservative, who follow House proceedings closely; and I just wanted to give some examples.

The conservative Chicago Tribune recently said, How do House Republicans respond to ethical lapses? By trying to bury them.

□ 1245

The Hartford Courant concluded, ''The committee has been careening toward ethical oblivion in recent years, as the majority Republicans have relaxed the standards, eased up on investigations and created trapdoors through which alleged transgressors could escape.''

The Republican leadership did not stop at just weakening the ethics rules, the Republican leadership also purged three Republican Members of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, three Members who were not in the pockets of the leadership.

After losing his chairmanship of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) told The Washington Post that there is ''a bad perception out there that there was a purge in the committee and that people were put in that would protect our side of the aisle better than I did. Nobody should be there to protect anybody. They should be there to protect the integrity of the institution.''

Mr. Speaker, congressional Republicans should listen to their former ethics chairman, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY). The integrity of the House of Representatives is much more important than any one Member.

These actions by the Republican majority really make one wonder why the changes are necessary now. It seems clear to me that the Republican leadership went to all of this trouble to protect one of its leaders. Last month the Wall Street Journal, which has a conservative editorial page, charged there is an ''odor,'' an ''unsavory whiff'' at the very highest reaches of this House. Every single day, it seems, more revelations come out about questionable actions by a member of the Republican leadership. These daily revelations should concern every Member of the institution.

My Democrat colleagues and I realize the integrity of the House is at stake. We cannot allow weakened ethics rules to move forward to protect anyone, and it is critical that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct be allowed to do its job and that is impossible under the new Republican rules.

Mr. Speaker, as the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) said back in November 1995, ''The time has come that the American people know exactly what their representatives are doing here in Washington, are they feeding at the public trough, taking lobbyist-paid vacations, getting wined and dined by special interest groups, or are they working hard to represent their constituents? The American people have a right to know.'' That was the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), in his own words 10 years ago.

Let me say, the majority leader was right, the American people deserve answers and they will not get those answers under the weakened Republican ethics rules. That is why Democrats are fighting so hard to have the old rules restored. If the majority leader believes his comments from 10 years ago, I would think he would join us in our fight.

DISCRIMINATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we are currently engaged in a detailed and comprehensive review of the United Nations, the system it has, with the goal of providing reforms that are going to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficiency in all U.N. operations. A critical component of this effort must include measures to ensure that Israel is afforded equal treatment and representation while addressing the anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic component that is pervasive in many U.N. bodies and its affiliated agencies.

The 1975 United Nations resolution equating Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, to racism stands out as an example of this bias and outright bigotry. While this was the most notorious illustration of its anti-Jewish sentiment at the U.N. there are many, many others.

During the 1991 session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, for example, the Syrian representative to the U.N. repeated the Damascus blood libel that Jews killed Christian children to use their blood to make Matzoth. In 1997, the Palestinian representative charged that the Israeli Government had injected 300 Palestinian children with the HIV virus.

The goals of the 2001 U.N. World Conference Against Racism were undermined by hateful anti-Jewish rhetoric and anti-Israeli political agendas, prompting both Israel and the United States to withdraw their delegations from the conference.

In the United Nations General Assembly, we must look no further than the over 20 resolutions introduced by the Palestinian delegation each and every year against Israel, challenging Israel's policies and her very right to exist. During the 59th session of the U.N. General Assembly for 2004, close to 30 percent of all resolutions considered by this body were measures condemning Israel in some fashion.

At the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, there is an entire agenda item, item 8, that is dedicated to attacking and criticizing Israel. Countries that are gross human rights violators, such as Libya, Indonesia, and Egypt, have introduced resolutions under this category that criticize Israel for alleged human rights abuses in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

An additional resolution was introduced at this year's Human Rights Commission regarding what was termed as the Palestinian right of self-determination for the Palestinians, as well as another one on Israel and Lebanon. Yet there was not a single measure on the Syrian regime's gross violations of the rights of the Syrian and the Lebanese people or on the deplorable acts committed by the Iranian regime against its people.

Israel is a democracy and yet its sovereignty and its right to defend itself are frequently called into question in the United Nations system. The ruling last summer by the International Court of Justice on Israel's security fence is a case in point. Not only was Israel's inherent right to self-defense branded illegitimate by the United Nations, but terrorists and suicide bombers remain uncensored.

In addition, the failure of the U.N. system in fulfilling its mandate is illustrated by the limitations placed on Israel's membership. Israel is denied the ability to serve or run for leadership positions in multiple U.N. bodies and its affiliated agencies. While Israel was accepted as a temporary member of the Western European and Others Group, it is not allowed to present candidacies for open seats in any U.N. body and is not able to compete for major U.N. bodies.

Israel is excluded from consultations at the U.N. offices in Geneva, Nairobi, Rome and Vienna. By contrast, there is a separate ''U.N. Division For Palestinian Rights,'' a ''Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, a U.N. Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative to the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority,'' and ''NGO Network on the Question of Palestine.''

There is also an entire agency, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, specifically designated for Palestinian refugees at a cost of over $400 million in the year 2004, yet all other refugees and internally displaced persons throughout the world are covered by the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner For Refugees.

Mr. Speaker, I include the remainder of my statement for the RECORD, and close by saying any effort at reforming the United Nations must include an end to the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic sentiment that has infected the U.N. organization for far too long.

I held a hearing last week to evaluate United Nations programs related to the Middle East, with special emphasis on the anti-Israel discrimination and anti-Semitic attacks.

It became abundantly clear that any U.N. reform efforts must address this imbalance and bias in favor of rogue states and individual groups.

In turn, the discrimination against Israel in the United Nations must be brought to an immediate end.

I have undertaken various initiatives to correct this injustice and ensure full membership and participation for Israel in all U.N. forums.

Most recently, I introduced H. Res. 54: calling on the United Nations to hold countries accountable for anti-Semitic statements and anti-Israeli incitement and calling for U.N. entities, such as UNESCO, to develop and implement Holocaust education programs throughout the world as part of an effort to combat such religious intolerance and anti-Israeli bias.

I ask my colleagues to render their support to these efforts and to co-sponsor this resolution.

The goals enshrined in the U.N. Charter—the promotion of international peace and security, and the respect for fundamental human rights—have never been more significant for the Jewish people and the State of Israel, which was founded on the ashes of the Holocaust.

BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION IN 109TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, Republicans and Democrats alike in this House can take a great deal of pride in the work product that has come forward in the 109th Congress. We know that for 8 years there has been an attempt to pass bankruptcy reform legislation, to finally bring some common sense to our bankruptcy law. With a strong bipartisan vote, Democrats joining with Republicans, we finally have been able to bring about bankruptcy reform.

We know that frivolous lawsuits have been a tremendous problem, and class action reform is again another very important bipartisan victory that we have been able to bring about.

Securing our borders. Our national security is our number one priority in this country. It has to be constitutional, but securing our borders is very important. With a strong, bipartisan vote, we have been able to pass the Real ID legislation which has now been attached to the very supplemental appropriations bill which also enjoyed very strong bipartisan support.

The highway bill enjoyed strong bipartisan support with Democrats and Republicans coming together to work on this important issue.

We also know that trying to save small businesses and family farms has been very important, and that is why Democrats and Republicans came together to permanently repeal the death tax, one of the most onerous taxes of all, and we also know that dealing with the prospect of a horrible terrorist attack is something that we had not contemplated up until September 11, 2001. Now we have seriously considered the prospect of that by passing very important Continuity in Government legislation which enjoyed the support of 122 Democrats along with Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, just last week we saw 41 Democrats joined with Republicans to pass the very important energy legislation geared toward reducing the cost of gasoline which is one of the great challenges our constituents face.

We have enjoyed those strong bipartisan victories: bankruptcy, highway, continuity in government, border security, energy, and repeal of the death tax. These are very important bipartisan victories, but it is also important to note that we have had a very important bipartisan win just today, and it is because of the policies of President Bush and the United States Congress that we have been able to see the Syrians, after 3 long decades, finally extricate themselves from Lebanon.

I had the privilege of joining with a bipartisan delegation of my colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CRENSHAW) join with us in going into Beirut, Lebanon. We had a chance to meet with young students who were great activists at Martyr's Square at the grave site of Rafik Hariri, the former Prime Minister who was tragically assassinated. These students said because of what the United States of America and the Coalition forces did in Iraq, laying the groundwork for 8.5 million people to vote on January 30, 2005, they were willing to stand up and free their country, and they were willing to die to ensure that the people of Lebanon would be free.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say while we have enjoyed a wide range of bipartisan victories in the 109th Congress under the very able leadership of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), it is also very important to note that under his leadership and the leadership of President Bush, we have been able to see democracy spread throughout the Middle East. It is exactly what President Bush said, and thank God we vigorously pursued that policy.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 58 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God, Well-spring of all creation and Provident Guide of our Nation's history, You bring us together for this session of the 109th Congress of the United States.

From diversity, You fashion one Nation. Out of the human search for truth and faulty efforts to lovingly accept one another in fellowship, You inspire consensus and settle a just yet temporary compromise. Grant to all patience and civility in every endeavor.

For You leave this work in such human hands, though You are the designer of lasting results.

Lord, without a transcendent framework, the movable pieces of this mosaic of government will not fall into place.

Alone and filled with fears and absolutes, all human effort to seek the common good will only lead to some artificial conformity or relative common denominator.

So again, our Nation turns to You in prayer, as we will do, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. MCNULTY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MCNULTY 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

> S. 893. An Act to make technical corrections in the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004.

HEALTH INSURANCE PATIENT-OWNERSHIP PLAN

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

Mr. Speaker, I am a third-generation physician. Both my father and grandfather were doctors, and I practiced medicine for over 20 years before coming to Congress. I can tell my colleagues that without a doubt, the doctor-patient relationship is far from what it used to be, or ought to be.

Today, our health care system is big business. The doctor-patient relationship is often obstructed by insurance companies, the government, and employers. The result is a system that prevents people from having control and ownership of critical health care decisions in their own lives.

Today, employers or the government most often determine what health insurance coverage a person receives, they dictate what the copays and the deductibles are, and they hold the contract with the insurance company.

I believe that the person most affected by health care decisions should be the one who has the most control over those decisions, and that is the patient.

Mr. Speaker, it is time we started thinking about health care in a new way. We should put health care choices in the patient's hands, not the employer's, not the insurance company's, and certainly not the government's. H. Res. 215, the Health Insurance Patient-Ownership Plan, is a good way to begin, and I ask my colleagues for their support on this new, exciting, and positive initiative.

OPPOSING THE PRIVATIZATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to reiterate my emphatic opposition to the privatization of Social Security. This program would not only hurt millions of elderly Americans but, ultimately, the whole country. For women and working families especially, Social Security is a lifeline, and they need to know that they can rely on a guaranteed benefit.

Social Security was never intended to be a roll-the-dice stock market gambit. Social Security was never meant to be an elaborate investment scheme geared to maximizing returns. Social Security was designed as a simple, straightforward social insurance program that ensures all of us to spend our golden years in a basic level of dignity, independence, and security.

Mr. Speaker, privatization is also not good for young workers. A 30-year-old worker making $40,000 a year will lose 27 percent of their benefits under this plan. That is almost $6,000 a year.

I urge all of my colleagues, let us work together and solve a manageable problem.

PARENTS DESERVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW

(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, a woman from my district came to Washington last month to tell Congress about how her daughter was taken to New Jersey for an abortion without her knowledge. This mom knew about her 14-year-old daughter's pregnancy. Her daughter had chosen to keep the baby and was attending prenatal classes.

But the boyfriend's family, according to her testimony, ''planned, paid for, coerced, harassed, and threatened her into having an abortion. They left her alone during the abortion and went to eat lunch.''

About 80 percent of the public favors parental notification laws. Over 30 States have enacted such laws. As in the case of my constituent, these laws are often evaded by interstate transportation of minors, and it is often openly encouraged in advertising by abortion providers.

This week, the House will consider legislation that merely says that in States that protect a parent's right to know, taking a young girl across State lines will not keep the parent in the dark. The bill would make it a Federal offense to transport a minor across State lines to circumvent that State's abortion parental notification laws. In addition, the bill requires that in a State without parental notification, abortion providers are required to notify a parent.

I urge support of the bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). 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 is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

REAUTHORIZING THE STEEL AND ALUMINUM ENERGY CONSERVATION AND TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1988

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1158) to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1158

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

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 9 of the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 5108) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

''There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this Act $12,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2006 through 2010.''.

(b) STEEL PROJECT PRIORITIES.—Section 4(c)(1) of the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 5103(c)(1)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (H), by striking ''coatings for sheet steels'' and inserting ''sheet and bar steels''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(K) The development of technologies which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988 is further amended—

(1) by striking section 7 (15 U.S.C. 5106); and

(2) in section 8 (15 U.S.C. 5107), by inserting '', beginning with fiscal year 2006,'' after ''close of each fiscal year''.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1158, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1158, the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act. I would like to commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), for reintroducing this important legislation which she originally introduced and which passed the House in the 108th Congress.

There are many reasons why we should pass this legislation today.

First of all, the metals industry is highly energy-intensive. Taken together, the steel, aluminum, and copper industries account for more than 10 percent of industrial usage in the United States. President Bush's national energy plan recognized that improving energy efficiency in our most energy-intensive industries could yield large improvements in productivity, product quality, safety, and pollution prevention.

Second, we have a strategic national interest in helping our metals industry remain competitive. For any industry, energy efficiency means increased production without increased energy consumption or costs. Improving energy efficiency helps the bottom line, making American metal products more competitive on the global market. That means more jobs here at home.

But energy efficiency is more than that. Reducing energy use means reducing our emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases, and increasing our energy security. In this way, energy efficiency just makes sense, dollars and cents, for the Nation.

H.R. 1158 recognizes this fact and puts in place a new requirement that program managers consider the potential for technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions when developing their research plans. In this way the bill updates the plan to address current concerns about the impact of energy-intensive industries.

For these reasons, both the Committee on Science and the full House passed a similar bill by voice vote in the 108th Congress, and the Committee on Science approved H.R. 1158 by voice vote in March.

I encourage my colleagues to demonstrate support for this bill again today.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to join the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) in support of H.R. 1158, the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act. I commend her for her support today, and I also commend the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART) for taking a leadership role in pursuing this

legislation dating back to the last Congress.

This bill will benefit our constituents, Democrat and Republican alike. It has been a pleasure to have this opportunity to work in a bipartisan effort to bring this measure to the floor today.

Today, almost one-quarter of the steel production in the United States is in the Chicago, northern Indiana region. But, unfortunately, our country no longer hails as the world's leading producer. My constituents in the Third District of Illinois have been especially impacted by the changes that have come from increased foreign competition. In my area, families and communities have been badly hurt by job losses. But the impact has also been felt in other places around the country.

My father-in-law in Johnstown, Pennsylvania lost his job as a steelworker when his plant was forced to close. This bill will help prevent further losses of good American jobs by increasing the competitiveness of our domestic manufacturing.

I also strongly believe that the overall prospects for the American steel industry have an important bearing on our future economic security as well as our national security. For these reasons, I strongly support this bill, which has become known as the metals initiative.

This bill, improving upon a program which was originally passed by the 108th Congress, authorizes Federal cost-sharing of research. The goals of this research are threefold: increased competitiveness for the U.S. metals industry, energy efficiency, and a cleaner environment.

The development of technologies that will increase energy efficiency as well as improve our international competitiveness is key to maintaining our national security, both from an economic and a military perspective. Likewise, the implementation of more environmentally friendly technologies that reduce emissions or reduce demand for petroleum will result in both a public benefit, a cleaner environment; and a private benefit, a cut in the cost of production.

The metals initiative has three very important provisions that make it a commonsense vehicle for pursuing cooperation between government and industry. First, there is a payback provision which requires that the Federal investment be repaid out of net proceeds of commercialization once the technology is developed. This provision prevents the program from taking on the negative connotations of a mere Federal subsidy. Instead, it provides a framework for these domestic companies, their employees, and the communities that rely upon the revenue bases to benefit from the new technologies that are made possible through this public-private partnership.

The second provision that makes this partnership work is the 70 percent/30 percent government-industry cost-share. When industry puts their own money at risk, the projects get senior management attention. Historically, these types of steel research and development projects have yielded results that meet national needs and are highly marketable, producing a win-win situation.

□ 1415

The third provision calls for industry ownership of intellectual property produced from the research. Twenty-five years of experience under the Bayh-Dole Act has shown that when ownership of patents is left with inventors, the likelihood that patents will be put to commercial use dramatically increases. This factor creates opportunities for economic growth and better job security for hard-working Americans.

The Metals Initiative is simply a great example of how public private partnerships can benefit both taxpayers and share holders. It will help enrich the overall economy, offer much needed stimulation for the growth of technology in key industries, and protect the environment. With recent changes in trade laws and other international forces at work, we owe it especially to the people who work in these industries. All Americans benefit from such commonsense programs. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1158 today and vote ''yes'' on this bill.

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART), who is the sponsor of this legislation.

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Chairwoman Biggert) and ranking member (Mr. HONDA) of the Energy Subcommittee for working together to make sure that this bill moved forward. I am pleased for their support and also for the support of the Science Committee chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT), and ranking member, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), for moving the bill through committee and also for their support. I especially thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI), who just spoke, for working with me on this legislation, H.R. 1158, the bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act.

The steel industry is one of the most energy-intensive industries with energy accounting for a major portion of the cost of production. Improvement in energy efficiency is therefore an important component to reducing the cost of steel and thereby making us more competitive.

Recent experiences have shown that energy costs per unit of output of steel can be reduced significantly through more intelligent capital-intensive investments in modifications to existing plants and equipment and conversion to more energy-efficient processes.

Investment made at the government level in partnerships with industry to stimulate achievement of this increased energy efficiency has shown great results over the years.

This legislation would reauthorize the steel and aluminum competitiveness act, which established a public private partnership, a research initiative. It is cost sharing with government and industry, focused on improving industrial energy efficiency in the steel and aluminum and fabrication industries.

The bill will result in improved energy efficiency in the domestic metals industries, thereby improving our competitiveness and also improving the cost and quality of the actual product. This efficiency offers environmental benefits through reduced emissions per unit of steel and aluminum produced. It can also help reduce the future demand for energy in this industrial sector.

The steel industry and the Department of Energy continue this partnership under the Metals Initiative and its predecessor, the Steel Initiative, even after the authorization expired; so, therefore, it is something that is successful enough to have provided with its funding.

For fiscal year 2006, the administration has only recommended $6.5 million. That is $3.8 million for steel and $2.7 million for aluminum, which is slightly more than half of the $11.1 million provided in 2004.

This legislation would reauthorize the 1988 act through 2010. Over the years, 58 steel companies and 23 research organizations participated in and benefited from this program. Two of those companies, INTEG Process Group and U.S. Steel from my area, participated in a subcommittee hearing on this bill last year and testified regarding the benefits this initiative has produced; the jobs it has obviously preserved and provided; the opportunity that it has provided in those industries as well.

The bill authorizes $12 million for this program for fiscal years 2006 through 2010, for a total of $60 million over 5 years. It is an investment that is well worth it to preserve and grow an industry that is so important to our country.

This bill is right for this industry, it is right for energy security, and it is right for our competitiveness, and it is good for the environment.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1158, the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act. I want to thank my friend and colleague from Illinois, Representative BIGGERT for her leadership, as well as Representative MELISSA HART, for her persistence in introducing this legislation in the 108th Congress and again in the 109th Congress.

I am pleased Chairman BOEHLERT and Ranking Member GORDON acted quickly in the House Science Committee to mark-up this bill and bring it to the floor today because it helps our steel, aluminum, copper, and other metal

industries stay competitive in today's global marketplace.

H.R. 1158, the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness bill before us today authorizes the Department of Energy to develop a public and private partnership to build upon important research goals, such as energy efficiency, increasing competitiveness of the U.S. metals industries, and improving the environment. By working together, both the taxpayers and share holders can benefit from this federal cost share between the government and the metals industries.

The domestic steel industry alone has come a long way since the steel crisis began in 1988. In my home state of Illinois, the crisis has resulted in four steel companies filing for bankruptcy, including Laclede Steel and the parent company for Granite City Steel, which are in my Congressional District. Approximately 5,000 steel workers lost their jobs in Illinois alone.

Now, prices are stabilizing and the industry is restructuring and consolidating. All of this has happened without hampering the availability of competitively priced steel products. However, aggressive trade laws and other international pressures can damage the progress that was made. Therefore, it is important we continue down the path of successful recovery because the overall prospects for our steel industry can affect our future economic and national security.

As a member of the Congressional Steel Caucus, I am deeply committed to making sure the metals industries stay competitive and for these reasons, I support to this bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, we have no more speakers. I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1158, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING REVITALIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 28) to amend the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 28

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 ''High-Performance Computing Revitalization Act of 2005''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Section 2 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5501) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(10) Commercial application of the results of Federal investment in basic and computing science is consistent with longstanding United States technology transfer policy and is a critical national priority, particularly with regard to cybersecurity and other homeland security applications, because of the urgent needs of commercial, academic, and individual users as well as the Federal and State Governments.''.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

Section 4 of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5503) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (2), by inserting ''and multidisciplinary teams of researchers'' after ''high-performance computing resources'';

(2) in paragraph (3)—

(A) by striking ''scientific workstations,'';

(B) by striking ''(including vector supercomputers and large scale parallel systems)'';

(C) by striking ''and applications'' and inserting ''applications''; and

(D) by inserting '', and the management of large data sets'' after ''systems software'';

(3) in paragraph (4), by striking ''packet switched''; and

(4) by amending paragraphs (5) and (6) to read as follows:

''(5) 'Program' means the High-Performance Computing Research and Development Program described in section 101; and

''(6) 'Program Component Areas' means the major subject areas under which are grouped related individual projects and activities carried out under the Program.''.

SEC. 4. HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

Title I of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5511 et seq.) is amended—

*(1) in the title heading, by striking ''**AND THE NATIONAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION NETWORK**'' and inserting ''**RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**'';*

(2) in section 101—

*(A) the section heading, by striking ''**NATIONAL HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING**'' and inserting ''**HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**'';*

(B) in subsection (a)—

(i) in the subsection heading, by striking ''NATIONAL HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING'' and inserting ''HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT'';

(ii) by striking paragraphs (1) and (2) and inserting the following: ''(1) The President shall implement a High-Performance Computing Research and Development Program, which shall—

''(A) provide for long-term basic and applied research on high-performance computing;

''(B) provide for research and development on, and demonstration of, technologies to advance the capacity and capabilities of high-performance computing and networking systems;

''(C) provide for sustained access by the research community in the United States to high-performance computing systems that are among the most advanced in the world in terms of performance in solving scientific and engineering problems, including provision for technical support for users of such systems;

''(D) provide for efforts to increase software availability, productivity, capability, security, portability, and reliability;

''(E) provide for high-performance networks, including experimental testbed networks, to enable research and development on, and demonstration of, advanced applications enabled by such networks;

''(F) provide for computational science and engineering research on mathematical modeling and algorithms for applications in all fields of science and engineering;

''(G) provide for the technical support of, and research and development on, high-performance computing systems and software required to address Grand Challenges;

''(H) provide for educating and training additional undergraduate and graduate students in software engineering, computer science, computer and network security, applied mathematics, library and information science, and computational science; and

''(I) provide for improving the security of computing and networking systems, including Federal systems, including research required to establish security standards and practices for these systems.'';

(iii) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

(iv) in paragraph (2), as so redesignated by clause (iii) of this subparagraph—

(I) by striking subparagraph (B);

(II) by redesignating subparagraphs (A) and (C) as subparagraphs (D) and (F), respectively;

(III) by inserting before subparagraph (D), as so redesignated by subclause (II) of this clause, the following new subparagraphs:

''(A) establish the goals and priorities for Federal high-performance computing research, development, networking, and other activities;

''(B) establish Program Component Areas that implement the goals established under subparagraph (A), and identify the Grand Challenges that the Program should address;

''(C) provide for interagency coordination of Federal high-performance computing research, development, networking, and other activities undertaken pursuant to the Program;''; and

(IV) by inserting after subparagraph (D), as so redesignated by subclause (II) of this clause, the following new subparagraph:

''(E) develop and maintain a research, development, and deployment roadmap for the provision of high-performance computing systems under paragraph (1)(C); and''; and

(v) in paragraph (3), as so redesignated by clause (iii) of this subparagraph—

(I) by striking ''paragraph (3)(A)'' and inserting ''paragraph (2)(D)'';

(II) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) provide a detailed description of the Program Component Areas, including a description of any changes in the definition of or activities under the Program Component Areas from the preceding report, and the reasons for such changes, and a description of Grand Challenges supported under the Program;'';

(III) in subparagraph (C), by striking ''specific activities'' and all that follows through ''the Network'' and inserting ''each Program Component Area'';

(IV) in subparagraph (D), by inserting ''and for each Program Component Area'' after ''participating in the Program'';

(V) in subparagraph (D), by striking ''applies;'' and inserting ''applies; and'';

(VI) by striking subparagraph (E) and redesignating subparagraph (F) as subparagraph (E); and

(VII) in subparagraph (E), as so redesignated by subclause (VI) of this clause, by inserting ''and the extent to which the Program incorporates the recommendations of the advisory committee established under subsection (b)'' after ''for the Program'';

(C) in subsection (b)—

(i) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (5) as subparagraphs (A) through (E), respectively;

(ii) by inserting ''(1)'' after ''ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—'';

(iii) in paragraph (1)(C), as so redesignated by clauses (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph, by inserting '', including funding levels for the Program Component Areas'' after ''of the Program'';

(iv) in paragraph (1)(D), as so redesignated by clauses (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph, by striking ''computing'' and inserting ''high-performance computing and networking''; and

(v) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) In addition to the duties outlined in paragraph (1), the advisory committee shall conduct periodic evaluations of the funding, management, coordination, implementation, and activities of the Program, and shall report not less frequently than once every two fiscal years to the Committee on Science of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate on its findings and recommendations. The first report shall be due within one year after the date of enactment of this paragraph.''; and

(D) in subsection (c)(1)(A), by striking ''Program or'' and inserting ''Program Component Areas or''; and

(3) by striking sections 102 and 103.

SEC. 5. AGENCY ACTIVITIES.

Title II of the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991 (15 U.S.C. 5521 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) of section 201 to read as follows:

''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—As part of the Program described in title I, the National Science Foundation shall—

''(1) support research and development to generate fundamental scientific and technical knowledge with the potential of advancing high-performance computing and networking systems and their applications;

''(2) provide computing and networking infrastructure support to the research community in the United States, including the provision of high-performance computing systems that are among the most advanced in the world in terms of performance in solving scientific and engineering problems, and including support for advanced software and applications development, for all science and engineering disciplines; and

''(3) support basic research and education in all aspects of high-performance computing and networking.'';

(2) by amending subsection (a) of section 202 to read as follows:

''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—As part of the Program described in title I, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall conduct basic and applied research in high-performance computing and networking, with emphasis on—

''(1) computational fluid dynamics, computational thermal dynamics, and computational aerodynamics;

''(2) scientific data dissemination and tools to enable data to be fully analyzed and combined from multiple sources and sensors;

''(3) remote exploration and experimentation; and

''(4) tools for collaboration in system design, analysis, and testing.'';

(3) in section 203—

(A) by striking subsections (a) through (d) and inserting the following:

''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—As part of the Program described in title I, the Secretary of Energy shall—

''(1) conduct and support basic and applied research in high-performance computing and networking to support fundamental research in science and engineering disciplines related to energy applications; and

''(2) provide computing and networking infrastructure support, including the provision of high-performance computing systems that are among the most advanced in the world in terms of performance in solving scientific and engineering problems, and including support for advanced software and applications development, for science and engineering disciplines related to energy applications.''; and

(B) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (b);

(4) by amending subsection (a) of section 204 to read as follows:

''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—As part of the Program described in title I—

''(1) the National Institute of Standards and Technology shall—

''(A) conduct basic and applied metrology research needed to support high-performance computing and networking systems;

''(B) develop benchmark tests and standards for high-performance computing and networking systems and software;

''(C) develop and propose voluntary standards and guidelines, and develop measurement techniques and test methods, for the interoperability of high-performance computing systems in networks and for common user interfaces to high-performance computing and networking systems; and

''(D) work with industry and others to develop, and facilitate the implementation of, high-performance computing applications to solve science and engineering problems that are relevant to industry; and

''(2) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration shall conduct basic and applied research on high-performance computing applications, with emphasis on—

''(A) improving weather forecasting and climate prediction;

''(B) collection, analysis, and dissemination of environmental information; and

''(C) development of more accurate models of the ocean-atmosphere system.''; and

(5) by amending subsection (a) of section 205 to read as follows:

''(a) GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—As part of the Program described in title I, the Environmental Protection Agency shall conduct basic and applied research directed toward advancement and dissemination of computational techniques and software tools for high-performance computing systems with an emphasis on modeling to—

''(1) develop robust decision support tools;

''(2) predict pollutant transport and the effects of pollutants on humans and on ecosystems; and

''(3) better understand atmospheric dynamics and chemistry.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 28, as amended, the bill now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, when we think of how computers affect our lives, we probably think of the work we do on our office desktop machines or maybe the Internet surfing we do in our spare time. We do not normally think of the enormous contribution that supercomputers, also called high-performance computers, make to the world around us.

A recent report by the Council on Competitiveness outlined how high-performance computers currently are used in various industries. The report concluded that ''there is great potential for increased productivity, innovation and competitive advancement across the private sector'' as more industries learn how to take advantage of supercomputing technologies.

This is not at all surprising. At a Science Committee hearing last year, we learned that supercomputers allow companies to anticipate how new products will behave in different environments using simulations that are called ''virtual prototyping.''

For instance, the automotive industry uses high-performance computers to reduce costs and improve quality and safety during the vehicle design process. Pharmaceutical companies simulate chemical interactions to design new drugs. These approaches help companies increase the speed to market for new products.

High-performance computers also are central to maintaining U.S. leadership in many scientific fields. Computational science complements theory and experimentation in fields such as plasma physics and fusion, astrophysics, nuclear physics and genomics.

However, in June 2002, a new Japanese supercomputer, the Earth Simulator, was named the fastest in the world, a title it held through November 2004. Some experts claim that Japan was able to produce the Earth Simulator, a computer far ahead of American machines, because the U.S. had taken an overly cautious or conventional approach to computing R&D. In hindsight, we see that caution meant lost opportunities. Japan's Earth Simulator is an example of a road not taken.

But the U.S. is coming back. Last fall, American machines took the two top spots on the list of fastest supercomputers, pushing the Earth Simulator to third. I commend IBM and Silicon Graphics, Inc. for producing these amazing new machines.

The bill we are considering on the House floor today, H.R. 28, the High-performance Computing Revitalization Act of 2005, will ensure that America remains a leader in the development and use of supercomputers.

To achieve this aim, the bill does four things. First, it requires that Federal agencies provide the U.S. research community access to the most advanced high-performance computing systems and technical support for their users.

Second, there is more to computing than building big machines. That is why the bill requires Federal agencies to support all aspects of the high-performance computing for scientific and engineering applications.

Third, the bill requires the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to direct an interagency planning process to develop and maintain a road map for the provision of high-performance computing resources for the U.S. research community.

The original legislation that the bill amends, the High-performance Computing Act of 1991, gave rise to an interagency planning process that has lost the vitality it once had. This provision will help ensure a robust planning process so that our national high-

performance computing effort is not allowed to lag in the future.

Finally, the bill clarifies the mission of each of the Federal agencies that have a role in developing or using high-performance computing.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was the subject of a full committee hearing in May of 2004. At that hearing, Dr. John Marburger, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, communicated the administration's support for this bill. The bill is also consistent with a report written by the High End Computing Revitalization Task Force and released by OSTP on the day of the hearing.

More recently, the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, known as PITAC, on April 14 approved the recommendations for a report on computational science they will issue shortly. Designed to ensure U.S. preeminence and competitiveness in the computational science, these recommendations include sustained access for the research community to the highest end supercomputers, devotion of resources to software development and data management, and creation of a multidecade road map for computational science and the fields that require it. In other words, the actions this report recommends are exactly what today's bill requires the Federal Government to do.

The Nation's experts on PITAC, Dr. Marburger, and the Bush administration all recognize that we cannot imagine the kinds of problems that the supercomputers of tomorrow will be able to solve, but we can imagine the kinds of problems we will have if we fail to provide researchers in the United States with the computing resources they need to remain world-class.

This bill will guide Federal agencies in providing needed support to high-performance computing and its user communities. Our Nation's scientific enterprise and our economy will be stronger for it. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I would like to commend my colleague, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT), for her constant work on the Science Committee and these particular areas for the work that she has done over the last several years and her consistent leadership in support of the high-end computing.

I also thank my colleagues in the House for passing the previous version of this bill in the 108th Congress, and hopefully the Senate will pass this bill also in a timely manner.

H.R. 28 aims to restore U.S. world leadership in the area of high-performance computing. Supercomputing is a large national effort spread out over seven Federal agencies. This resolution seeks to better coordinate those agencies' efforts and to improve both short-term and long-term planning.

The Oak Ridge National Laboratory near my district is a center of national leadership and high-performance computing. Oak Ridge is the Department of Energy's largest science and energy laboratory. This lab is involved in many innovative research projects, including renewable energy, materials science, national security, and bioscience.

I am proud that the Oak Ridge National Lab near my district stands to become the home of the world's most powerful supercomputer.

I envision thousands of scientists traveling to Oak Ridge to use the computing facilities. The discoveries they make will change how we diagnose and cure diseases, heat and cool our homes, travel from place to place, and defend our liberties in time of warfare.

H.R. 28 will strengthen and streamline our national efforts in the areas of high-performance computing. I commend this bill and recommend this bill to my colleagues and ask for their support.

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished chairman of the Science Committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT).

(Mr. BOEHLERT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, this is very important legislation. It deals with the competitiveness of the United States of America in the global marketplace. This is something that too many take for granted that we are going to continue to be preeminent in the competitive world. We are not going to be preeminent in the competitive world if we do not invest wisely, if we do not direct our resources in the proper way, because the competition is all over the place. It is not just one State against another. It is the United States against the world. We are ahead. That is a position I like. I like to be ahead of the parade.

But I will tell you, when we look back, we see a lot of people following closely behind. So it is critically important that we do things like investing in high-performance computing. And among other things, this bill directs the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, that is the science advisor to the President of the United States, to develop and maintain a research development and deployment road map for the provision of high-performance computing systems for use by the research community in the United States of America.

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Now, that is a very important assignment. And we want Dr. Marburger down at the White House to know that those of us in the legislative branch are determined to give the resources necessary, the direction necessary to enable him to go forward, confident that he has the support, the bipartisan support of the Congress of the United States. So I commend this bill to my colleagues. I commend this bill to the other side of the Capitol, our colleagues in the United States Senate.

This is important business and let us get on with it. I thank my chairwoman, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) for the outstanding leadership she has provided and I thank my colleagues for their indulgence.

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I am the only one to come to this floor to oppose this bill. I will try to yield back at least a few minutes to the gentleman and hopefully they will be available should my comments result in comments of others that need rebuttal.

I support science. It is important to America. It is important to my district. But as we look at what we can accomplish, we also have to examine what we should try to accomplish. While we expand the tools of the human race, we must also look at the pitfalls.

This is an issue that I have been talking about for a long time. I first brought it to the floor 5 years ago and that is best illustrated by the fact that roughly 50,000 years ago was the last time that a new level of intelligence came to this planet. It was our ancestors, who said hello to Neanderthal, the only other intelligence on the planet that we were aware of at the time. It did not work out so well for the Neanderthal.

Today we are as a species looking at two exciting new technologies, each which is likely to create an entity, a life form, with a higher level of intelligence than human beings; and, in fact, a higher level by a differential that exceeds whatever differential there was between human beings and Neanderthals. One of these technologies is genetic engineering. And if this was a genetic engineering bill, I would not get to speak on it as long because there would be more members to speak against it, worried about the societal implications. But genetic engineering raises questions that should also be raised by computer engineering, because the kind of high-technology, high-performance computer which is the subject of the bill is an important step towards the development of an artificial life form that will exceed human intelligence.

We had hearings 2 years ago in the Committee on Science where the consensus of experts and I did not invite any of these experts, senior committee members did, (chiefly the chairman) they testified that we are roughly 25 years away from a computer that exceeds human intelligence.

Now, I do not know whether it is 25 years or whether it is a bit longer or a bit less, but should we go headlong into developing the next intelligent species on this planet without even including, in the slightest, in our legislation something to say ''let us examine whether this is something we want to do, and whether we want to have any controls.''

The truth is, Mr. Speaker, we do not know whether we are creating Data from ''Star Trek, The Next Generation,'' or whether we are creating Hal from ''2001: A Space Odyssey.'' We know that the future will look like science fiction. We just do not know which science fiction book or movie.

Last year when the Committee on Science considered this same bill as H.R. 4218, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT) and I reached an agreement on an amendment that would provide for looking at the societal implications of future advances in information technology. That amendment was included in the bill that passed this House. Specifically, it directed the National Science Foundation to support research into the implications of computers, both hardware and software, that were capable of mimicking human ability to learn to reason and to make decisions. Likewise, the nanotechnology bill which passed both houses, and is now law, provided for even more extensive review into the societal implications, including explicitly the implications of developing levels of intelligence that exceeds those of human beings. But H.R. 28 strips out the provisions that were included in prior legislation. This draft says we will do nothing to look at the societal, the ethical, the environmental implications of what we are doing, and we will rush headlong into trying to do it without the slightest thought of whether we should do it.

My amendment in committee was defeated 17–19 on what was unfortunately, and inexplicably a party-line vote. My amendment put forward just a few weeks ago was identical to the compromise language the chairman and I reached in the 108th Congress.

Now, the importance of understanding how artificial intelligence will be achieved through information technology, how it will impact society—that importance has not decreased since last year. The amendment should be included before this bill leaves this House.

Now, I know there are those who say it is okay to create a computer that exceeds human intelligence and that is self-aware because it will not have hands and will not be able to act except through human beings. Trust me, there are those amongst us who would sell hands to the devil for a good stock tip. If you create Pandora's box, it will be opened.

Now, H.R. 28 deals with the creation of high-performance computers; and as I said and want to say again, the testimony before our committee was that we are 25 years, and this is not one crackpot, this was a consensus; the range was 20 to 30 years between now and when we develop a computer that exceeds human intelligence. And it is not just me. The DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Project Agency, has on its Web page the statement that its mission, supported by this bill, is to develop a computer which will ''learn from its experience, be aware of itself, and be able to reflect on its own behavior.''

So part of our government is engaged in trying to create maybe Hal, maybe Data, while here in the Congress we pretend that it is impossible, that it is not an issue worthy of reflection. DARPA is going to create a reflective computer, but we do not have a reflective Congress.

Now, I understand that H.R. 28 is an important bill to set goals and priorities in high-performance computer research development with a number of different agencies, including DARPA and its subsidiary agencies. What I do not understand is why there is such resistance to studying the implications of this research. We cannot and should not plunge ahead without a provision to study these implications.

Join me in rejecting this bill on suspension. A bill with this level of implications should not be considered under a suspension of the rules. Send this bill back to the Committee on Science. Have the Committee on Science create a balanced program. Overwhelmingly, this bill should deal with supporting the technology, marching forward, achieving all of the goals that the preceding speakers have indicated. But then let us also put in the bill just a little language to say that we ought to look at the implications: Whether it is likely that this technology will create an entity more intelligent than human beings? Whether that entity is likely to be self-aware? How we could either cause or prevent such self-awareness? What are the societal and ethical implications of having a slave entity reflective, intelligent, and commanded to do what we instruct, without so much as the minimum wage?

So let us pass this bill next month, after the Committee on Science can provide some balance to it.

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

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier the Committee on Science held a hearing on the high-performance computer in May of last year. And at that time my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) asked the experts who testified at that hearing whether there was any danger of computers approaching the cognitive abilities of humans. And the witnesses gave a resounding no in answer to that question.

More specifically, my colleague wanted to know how close we were to a machine that has reached a level of intelligence where it would be entitled to the minimum wage. Dr. Jack Marburger, the President's Science Advisor responded, ''Not very. We are quite far from that in terms of number of components measured in neurons; for example, the interconnectivity of the human brain far exceeds anything that we can currently build or foresee in the foreseeable future with computer hardware.''

Dr. Rick Stevens, a renowned computer scientist from Argonne National Laboratory, responded to the same question saying, ''My personal view is that I would be much more concerned with near-term issues associated with large-scale computing or the use of large-scale data systems to collect information. Right now, if you had to estimate what is the most intelligent device we can build, it is roughly between a worm and an insect in terms of what it can do.''

I think it is exceedingly inappropriate for this bill to impose a requirement on our Federal agencies to focus on the societal implications of hypothetical human-mimicking computers. Doing so would suggest that we as a body fundamentally misunderstand the nature and focus of high-performance computing research.

In addition, as Dr. Stevens pointed out at our hearing last year, information technology has societal implications for privacy, for workplace collaboration and for many other areas. Our Federal agencies should focus any resources for societal studies on these real and immediate needs.

Finally, NSF already has the ability to conduct research generally into social, economic, and work-force implications of information technology. We should allow the research community, via the peer review process, and the agency to determine if this sort of research becomes necessary. This should not be a mandate in this bill.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS) has 9 minutes remaining.

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his additional generosity. I wish to respond to the comments of the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit for the RECORD the section of DARPA's mission statement that I referred to previously where DARPA itself indicates that its mission, using the funds provided by this Congress, is to create a computer that is self-aware and able to reflect on its own behavior.

Mr. Speaker, we have thrown around terms as to what is close and what is not. It just comes down to whether 25 years, 30 years, is something close enough for us to be concerned about, or should we be concerned about only the immediate future? I would point out

that we are not going to have self-aware computers for at least 10, maybe 15 or 20 congressional elections. And so if that is how we measure time, self-aware computers are a long way away. But when we approve construction projects and roads, we do not build bridges that are going to collapse in 25 or 30 years, and we assume that human beings will be the only intelligent species using those bridges.

If we are concerned when we build infrastructure for things 20, 30, 50, 100 years down the road, then we should be even more concerned with this bill. And we should not pass this bill in this form and say, well, we will worry about these issues when they come up in some subsequent decade.

□ 1445

In addition, it is put forward that we will just have the scientists and the research community figure out how to deal with these issues. That is perhaps the problem, because if we provide the support exclusively to the hardware and software scientists and nothing to those who will consider the societal implications, the ethical implications, the philosophical implications—then no one will be looking at those issues, then we will not have done our job to provide a balanced, scientific research bill. That is why I am voting ''no.''

The material I referred to previously is as follows:

DARPA STRATEGIC PLAN: SECTION 3.7: COGNITIVE COMPUTING (RELEASED FEBRUARY 2005)

Many elements of the information technology revolution that have vastly improved the effectiveness of the U.S. forces and transformed American society (e.g., time-sharing, personal computers, and the Internet) were given their impetus by J.C.R. Licklider, a visionary scientist at DARPA some 40 years ago. Licklider's vision was of people and computers working symbiotically. He envisioned computers seamlessly adapting to people as partners that would handle routine information processing tasks, thus freeing the people to focus on what they do best—think analytically and creatively—and greatly extend their cognitive powers. As we move to an increasingly network-centric military, the vision of intelligent, cooperative computing systems responsible for their own maintenance is more relevant than ever.

Despite the enormous progress in information technology over the years, information technology still falls well short of Licklider's vision. While computing systems are critical to U.S. national defense, they remain exceedingly complex, expensive to create, insecure, frequently incompatible, and prone to failure. And, they still require the user to adapt to them, rather than the other way around. Computers have grown ever faster, but they remain fundamentally unintelligent and difficult to use. Something dramatically different is needed.

In response, DARPA is revisiting Licklider's vision as its inspiration for the strategic thrust, ''Cognitive Computing.'' Cognitive computers can be thought of as systems that know what they're doing. Cognidtive computing systems ''reason'' about their environments (including other systems), their goals, and their own capabilities. They will ''learn'' both from experience and by being taught. They will be capable of natural interactions with users, and will be able to ''explain'' their reasoning in natural terms. They will be robust in the face of surprises and avoid the brittleness and fragility of expert systems.

The benefits from this cognitive computing thrust will be profound. The increasing complexity of military systems means that the level of expertise needed to maintain them is also increasing—as are the staffing requirements for virtually every military function that uses computing and communications technology. By creating systems that know what they are doing, and that can configure, maintain, and adapt themselves, we will be able to drastically reduce the staff needed for operations centers, forward command posts, and even in support of small dismounted units and special operations teams. Cognitive computing technology will also help us to deal with the increasing tempo of operations and the complexity of plans, such as Air Tasking Orders and joint hostage rescue operations plans, by allowing computers to tap into the accumulated knowledge of past experience on behalf of their human partners.

Along these lines, DARPA's Personalized Assistant that Learns (PAL) program will create intelligent personalized assistants for many tasks, such as a commander's assistant, an intelligence analyst's assistant, or a decision-maker's executive assistant. These assistants will interact with their human partners by accepting direct, naturally expressed guidance to learn their partner's preferences and procedures. Then, they will be able to anticipate the human's needs and prepare materials to be ready just in time for them. These new and unprecedented artificial helpers should reduce military staffing needs in many key places and will help ensure decisions are made in a timely fashion and with the best possible preparation.

To meet these challenges and seize these opportunities, DARPA has structured its work in cognitive computing to catalyze innovative work in single cognitive systems. collaborative teams of cognitive systems, and collective cognition from large numbers of small non-cognitive elements. Each area will demonstrate the power of merging reasoning, learning, perception, and communication technologies. These areas will be supported and complemented by broad-based technology efforts in the hardware, software, and integration techniques needed.

The strategic thrust of cognitive computing is a template shaping DARPA's core technology foundation work in information technology.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I certainly understand the gentleman from California's (Mr. SHERMAN) efforts in an attempt to amend the bill in the committee process. As the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) has explained, however, there are other areas today in the policy of NSF that literally would look into the particular issues that he has raised with his amendment.

As a result of that, both the ranking member and the chairman agreed that this legislation is what we need to be considering today. So I strongly support this bill. I think that it is good for America. I think it is good perhaps even for the world; but, certainly, it is good in the areas where research and science is a major part of offering opportunities and options for those of us who live in this country.

So on that effort, I again make my comments of being sorry that the gentleman from California's (Mr. SHERMAN) efforts were not successful in the committee. Actually, last year, we did consider that amendment, and it actually passed the House floor; but I recommend strongly to the Members of the House passage of this bill, strongly support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the remainder of my time.

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

I would agree with the gentleman from Tennessee that we really do have the means to conduct research generally and to the social, economic and workforce implication of information technology, and NSF has that ability; and I think that that is all that is necessary. We do not want a mandate in this bill.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the bill's chief cosponsor, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS), and thank him for all the great work that he has done on this bill. It is a very important bill to his district, to my district, and to all of the Nation.

I would also like to thank the other cosponsor of this important legislation, including the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Science; along with the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON), the ranking member; the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS); the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY); and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JOHNSON), and I thank them all for their support.

With that, I would also like to thank my colleagues in this body for supporting an identical bill to this one in the 108th Congress; and, finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the Committee on Science staff, majority and minority, for their hard work to bring this bill to the floor today.

As I said earlier, we must commit to providing sustained support for high-performance computers at our Federal civil science agencies. H.R. 28 represents just such a commitment. Our Nation's scientific enterprise and our economy will be the stronger for it. I would urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 28, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 96) recognizing the significance of African American women in the United States scientific community, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 96

Whereas African American women, once considered nontraditional participants in the United States scientific community, have become an indispensable part of the new technology society;

Whereas although women comprise approximately 25 percent of the 427,740 individuals employed in the United States workforce who hold a science and engineering doctoral degree, African American women comprise less than one percent of such individuals;

Whereas a skilled workforce is the essential fuel to propel the United States economy and ensure a high quality of life, and it is absolutely critical to the success of the economy to produce a scientifically literate workforce;

Whereas for these reasons, it is crucial for the United States to continue to aggressively recruit more minority and women students into careers in science and technology;

Whereas to improve the numbers of African American youth pursuing science, especially young women, it is crucial to provide strong scientific minds for them to look up to and emulate;

Whereas very little literature documents African American women and their place in science;

Whereas commemorating the achievements of African American women at the very top of the performance curve demonstrates to the world the importance of diversity in the workforce; and

Whereas Dr. Ruth Ella Moore (who in 1933 became the first African American woman to earn a Ph.D. in natural science from the Ohio State University), Dr. Roger Arliner Young (who in 1940 became the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in zoology from the University of Pennsylvania), Dr. Euphemia Lofton Haynes (who in 1943 became the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in mathematics from the Catholic University of America), Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson (who in 1973 became the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), and Dr. Mae Jemison (a physician and the first African American woman in space) represent only a few of the African American women who have broken through many barriers to achieve greatness in science: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress acknowledges and recognizes the significant achievements and contributions of African American women scientists, mathematicians, and inventors and supports the establishment of a special day on which these great minds may be honored and esteemed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) and the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 96, as amended, the resolution now under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 96, a resolution to recognize the significant contributions of African American women to the U.S. scientific community.

In recent history, it has become almost ordinary for talented individuals from diverse backgrounds to pursue educational opportunities in fields that were previously considered all white male domains. Yet today's women and minorities could never have succeeded in the once nontraditional fields of science, engineering, and mathematics had it not been for the courage of their predecessors.

For today's young women, it is difficult to appreciate how exceptional it was for African American women in particular to pursue a career in science. For those born in the early 20th century, they were told that they did not belong; and they felt lucky if they found work as research assistants to, or unpaid volunteers for, male scientists.

Yet the grit and perseverance of women like Ruth Ella Moore, the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. in natural science from Ohio State University, as well as civil rights legislation and the women's movement, help to overcome these obstacles. They also helped pave the way for the successes of women like Shirley Ann Jackson, the first African American woman to receive a Ph.D. from MIT, and Mae Jemison, the first African American woman in space as a crew member of the shuttle Endeavor.

Today, African American women scientists hold positions at all levels of universities, government laboratories, and industry. They chair departments and scientific societies; and they serve on peer review committees, something that was unthinkable just 25 years ago.

The women we are honoring in House Concurrent Resolution 96 are more than pioneers. They are role models for a new generation of women who are just beginning to think about their life's work and future ambitions and explore their many opportunities. Yet, despite these successes, women and minorities are still under-represented in undergraduate and graduate science and engineering education.

As national demographics shift, we simply cannot rely only on our traditional science, mathematics, engineering and technology workforce, which is overwhelmingly white and male, and retiring. If the U.S. is to remain innovative and competitive, we must nurture, prepare, and engage young women and minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics today.

That is what this resolution is all about. By underscoring the importance of diversity and recognizing the significant scientific achievements of African American women, I hope we can inspire more young women, and men, to follow in the footsteps of those who pursued science with such passion and enthusiasm.

In conclusion, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for her leadership on this very important issue. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman BOEHLERT) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) for their bipartisan support of this resolution and in our Committee on Science markup last month during Women's Month. I also want to commend the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) for her willingness to help us move this bill forward here today.

As this Nation faces a shortage of qualified scientists, it is appropriate that we discuss the significant contributions that African American women have made to the scientific community. Most people that know me know that this has been a passion of mine for many years.

In the past, most of the U.S. scientists and engineers were white males. According to Census Bureau projections, this segment of the workforce population will decline from 37 percent in 1995 to 26 percent in 2050. Looking at these numbers, it is obvious that this group will not provide the needed scientists and engineers, particularly since participation rates in these fields are also declining.

Clearly, it will be necessary to attract greater numbers of women and minorities to careers in science and engineering in order to avoid devastating consequences for the future. Efforts to increase the presence of Americans in science are incomplete unless they have a women's component. Some progress has been made, but much remains to be accomplished. Women make up half the population, but only 24 percent of the science and engineering workforce. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans as a group constitute 24 percent of the U.S. population, but only 7 percent of the total science and technology workforce.

African American women have an especially difficult time bridging the technology divide when it comes to their representation in the science fields. While women make up about 25 percent of the 427,740 employed science and engineering doctorate holders in the United States workforce, African American women comprise less than 1

percent employed as science and engineering doctorate holders. Many African American women who pursue science education experience isolation both in their graduate departments and in their communities.

So who are their mentors? One of the first pioneers was Dr. Ruth Ella Moore, the first African American woman to receive a doctoral degree in natural science in 1933. Dr. Moore graduated in 1933 from Ohio State University with a doctorate degree in bacteriology and was head of the department of bacteriology at Howard University's Medical School from 1947 to 1958.

In the field of space exploration, while most are familiar with Dr. Mae Jemison, few are aware that Katherine Coleman Goble Johnson was a key member of the control room during the Apollo 13 crisis. Katherine Johnson, a physicist, space scientist and mathematician, was instrumental in formulating calculations that helped the Apollo 13 return home safely in 1970 after a fuel tank explosion and computer system failure. That was detailed in Tom Hanks's film, ''Apollo 13.''

Unfortunately, many young African Americans are unfamiliar with these facts. Very little literature documents African American women and their place in science. To increase the number of African American youth pursuing science, especially young women, it is critical that we provide them strong science role models for them to admire and emulate.

In addition, commemorating the achievements of African American women at the very top of the performance curve demonstrates to the world the importance of diversity in the workforce, especially in the scientific community.

That is why I ask my colleagues to join me today by honoring our great African American women pioneers who helped pave the way for current science stars, like Dr. Mae Jemison and Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson.

As a medical doctor and the first African American woman in space, Dr. Jemison continues to inspire young people in the science field with her program, The Earth We Share International Camp, called TEWS, T-E-W-S, which is an acronym. It is designed to promote science literacy for all students.

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson was not only the first African American to receive a Ph.D. in physics from MIT but was also the first African American woman to receive a doctorate in any field from that school.

This resolution recognizes their achievements in science and technology and encourages a new generation of young women to continue in their legacies.

Again, I wish to thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman BOEHLERT) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Ranking Member GORDON) for working with me in a collegial manner, as we always do on the Committee on Science, and for allowing quick passage of the resolution and speedy action to the floor.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H. Con. Res. 96. This resolution represents our most needed commitment to supporting the continued progress of women and minorities and, in particular, African American women in the sciences. Full participation by all of our diverse population in an endeavor this important will be our key to future success as a world leader in science and technology.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to again congratulate the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), and I urge all my colleagues to vote for this bill.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 96, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING SECOND CENTURY OF BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS AND SUPPORTING THE MISSION AND GOALS OF THAT ORGANIZATION

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 41) recognizing the second century of Big Brothers Big Sisters, and supporting the mission and goals of that organization.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 41

Whereas the year 2004 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of Big Brothers Big Sisters;

Whereas Congress chartered Big Brothers in 1958;

Whereas Ernest Coulter recognized the need for adult role models for the youth he saw in court in New York City in 1904 and recruited ''Big Brothers'' to serve as mentors, beginning the Big Brothers movement;

Whereas Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest, largest youth mentoring organization in the nation, serving over 220,000 children in 2004 and approximately 2,000,000 since its founding 100 years ago;

Whereas Big Brothers Big Sisters has historically been supported through the generosity of individuals who have believed in the organization's commitment to matching at-risk children with caring, volunteer mentors;

Whereas Big Brothers and Big Sisters have given countless hours and forever changed the lives of America's children, contributing over 10,500,000 volunteer hours at an estimated value of $190,000,000 in 2004;

Whereas evidence-based research has shown that the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring model improves a child's academic performance and relationships with teachers, parents, and peers, decreases the likelihood of youth violence and drug and alcohol use, and raises self-confidence levels;

Whereas 454 local Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies are currently contributing to the quality of life of at-risk youth in over 5,000 communities across the United States; and

Whereas the future of Big Brothers Big Sisters depends not only on its past impact, but also on the future accomplishments of its Little Brothers and Little Sisters and the continued commitment of its Big Brothers and Big Sisters: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) recognizes the second century of Big Brothers Big Sisters, supports the mission and goals of the organization, and commends Big Brothers Big Sisters for its commitment to helping children in need reach their potential through professionally supported one to one mentoring relationships with measurable results;

(2) asks all Americans to join in marking the beginning of Big Brothers Big Sisters' second century and support the organization's next 100 years of service on behalf of America's children; and

(3) encourages Big Brothers Big Sisters to continue to strive towards serving 1,000,000 children annually.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Concurrent Resolution 41, the concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Government Reform, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 41, a resolution that honors one of America's greatest charities. This year marks the 101st year since the founding of Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Over the past century, this organization has been devoted to the well-being and development of our Nation's young people. Big Brothers Big Sisters aims to provide a mentor to every child who wants or needs one. Today, Big Brothers Big Sisters serves over 200,000 children ages 6 to 18, nationwide.

Performance statistics prove that children who are mentored by Big Brothers Big Sisters are much less likely than their peers to use illegal drugs or alcohol, to skip school, and

are more likely to have strong relationships with their families.

Today, the House specifically recognizes the thousands of mentors who have made a difference through Big Brothers Big Sisters during its first century. Mentoring a child requires no special training or experience, just a willingness to spend time with a child during his or her formative years. We salute their compassion.

Mr. Speaker, along with my distinguished colleagues, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), I commend Big Brothers Big Sisters for its commitment to helping children in need reach their potential, and I urge the adoption of House Concurrent Resolution 41.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) by stating my strong support for H. Con. Res. 41, recognizing the second century of Big Brothers Big Sisters and supporting the mission and goals of that organization.

Mr. Speaker, 2004 marked the 100th anniversary of Big Brothers Big Sisters, one of the Nation's greatest civic programs. Big Brothers Big Sisters is the oldest and largest youth-mentoring organization in the United States. As of last year, the organization served an astounding 225,000 youth between the ages of 5 and 18 in 5,000 communities across the country.

Research has demonstrated that mentoring helps at-risk youth overcome the many obstacles they face in their lives. Youths in the program, or ''Littles'' as they are called, are less likely to use illegal drugs, consume alcohol, skip school, or engage in acts of violence.

I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for introducing this important legislation. Big Brothers Big Sisters has made a positive impact on the lives of impoverished young people, especially, and others throughout the Nation. We all owe them a great debt of gratitude, and I trust they will have success as they continue in their work.

On a very personal note, Mr. Speaker, I had the good fortune to serve as a Big Brother to a little brother of mine, who then went on to become a staff person and work for the Mayor, Sharon Pratt, of Washington, D.C., and then went on to work for Vice President Al Gore, eventually becoming, and he is now, the minister and pastor of a church out in Maryland. So I know that the Big Brothers program is a good program; that it does work, because Reverend Courtney Miller is a prime example of that. And I certainly wish Courtney well as we wish the continuation of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE), one of the lead cosponsors of this legislation.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding me this time, and I rise in support of this concurrent resolution. I want to congratulate Big Brothers Big Sisters on 100 years of service. I think any organization that lasts for 100 years is certainly doing some things correctly.

At this time, I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that it is a very difficult time to be a young person in our Nation. We have a great deal of family instability. Roughly 50 percent of our children today are growing up without both biological parents, so they have suffered some serious dysfunction in their lives. Roughly 22 million young people today are fatherless, and of course they are moving into a world in which a drug and alcohol culture and violence is quite prevalent. So it is very, very difficult.

We find that mentoring is one way that we can help these young people negotiate their way through a very difficult world. Mentoring works. As my colleague from Ohio mentioned earlier, it improves graduation rates and it improves school attendance. One of the programs I work with very closely improves attendance by 80 percent. It improves grades significantly. The program I am involved with, about a 40 percent improvement. It improves peer and family relationships and even improves personal hygiene, which is something that many people do not realize. It decreases drug and alcohol abuse in many programs by as much as 50 percent. It decreases crime, gang membership, teen pregnancy, and dropout rates.

So this is about the best thing we have going, and it is very important to remember that it is very cost effective. It costs about $30,000 a year to lock somebody up, and yet most mentoring programs, some of the very best ones, cost maybe $400 to $500 per mentee per year. So we cannot have a better return on investment than that.

I serve as a mentor. I have been mentoring a young person now for about 3 years, and I had another young person for 4 or 5 years before that. My wife also mentors. A mentor is somebody who cares, somebody who shows up. An awful lot of young people in our culture today do not have an adult in their life that they can count on; that they know cares about them unconditionally and will be there for them through thick and thin.

A mentor is somebody who affirms. Again, so many young people today in our culture do not have anyone in their lives who say ''I believe in you, I see some talent, I think you could be a mechanic, I think you could be someone who can go to a community college, I think you could do well in school.'' So affirmation is something that all of us have to have in order to live effectively, and a mentor provides that.

A mentor is someone who provides a vision of what is possible, because so many times a young person grows up in a family where no one has graduated from high school, no one has gone to college, no one has set any type of vision out there for them as to what they might be. So a mentor oftentimes fulfills that role.

According to the National Mentoring Partnership, 18 million children in our country today need a mentor, yet only about 2.5 million actually are being mentored. Big Brothers Big Sisters accounts for roughly one-tenth of that number. So we have a huge gap from what is needed to what we are actually getting done.

We had a mentoring amendment attached to the No Child Left Behind bill that last year was funded at $50 million. This year, that money is in jeopardy. A lot of that money went to Big Brothers Big Sisters. So I would certainly like to encourage my colleagues to support this program and further this cause, because we have reached hundreds of thousands of young people as a result of it.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) for sharing their personal experiences with us relative to mentoring, and I urge passage of the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 41, a resolution highlighting the mission and goals of Big Brothers and Big Sisters and to recognize a hundred years of success in the organization.

I applaud the work that Big Brothers Big Sisters perform on a daily basis to assist America's youth. As you are well aware, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America has helped more than one million children nationwide in its 100 years of operation. Youth with mentors are significantly less likely to try drugs or alcohol, skip school, or exhibit violent behavior. Children who participate in Big Brothers Big Sisters programs have better relationships with peers, get better grades, and get along better with their families as a result of the one-on-one attention of a caring adult role model.

My district in El Paso, TX, is faced with significant challenges in deterring youth from becoming involved in drugs, alcohol, and violent activities. Founded in 1999, Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso has an excellent reputation in my district and has shown tremendous results. In fact, Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso has already drawn over $1 million in State and Federal funds to our city. Because Big Brothers Big Sisters works with schools and businesses, it acts as a catalyst in the community helping bring business men and women into the lives of students and strengthening the bond between program participants and the community. Last year, I was honored to be selected to serve as an honorary board member of the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of El Paso.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in recognizing Big Brothers for their century of service to America's young people.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Concurrent Resolution 41

recognizing the second century of Big Brothers Big Sisters, the oldest and largest youth mentoring organization in the United States which celebrated its 100th anniversary last year.

I want to thank Representative TOM OSBORNE for joining me in introducing this resolution and for his strong advocacy of mentoring. I also want to thank Chairman TOM DAVIS and Ranking Member HENRY WAXMAN of the House Government Reform Committee for their diligence and helpfulness in getting this resolution to the Floor today. And I also appreciate and want to thank Senator JOHN ENSIGN and Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD for their leadership in introducing this resolution in the Senate.

But the big heroes are the untold thousands of volunteers—Big Brothers and Big Sisters throughout the country—who for the last one hundred years have played critical roles in the mentoring of our nation's youth. Lastly and most of all, I would like to thank all of the Little Brothers and Little Sisters because they have been the ones to enrich our lives.

As you know, when Representative OSBORNE and I introduced this resolution in February, I came to the Floor to speak about my almost two decades of experience being a Big Brother, and my accomplished, now not-so-Little Brother, David. I was a young prosecutor in Southern California when I first became a Big Brother, and David was just seven years old. Through fun outings, good talks and merely spending time together, we learned a lot about each other and a lot about ourselves. He is now a Yale and USC film school graduate, and is emarking upon a wonderful career and many new adventures. Because of Big Brothers Big Sisters, I again experienced through David a child's wide-eyed optimism about the future, a teenager's eager determination to understand oneself and a young adult's pursuit of success.

Kids need to learn and mature in safe and nurturing environments, yet so many face difficult circumstances through broken families, poverty or simply a lack of opportunities. These situations create an emotional burden very heavy to bear at any age, but especially upon children. In some cases, these burdens are too much to bear, and a child who could have contributed greatly to society takes a much more destructive path. We can prevent this from happening. Through Big Brothers Big Sisters and like-minded organizations, we can reach those at risk of delinquency, and help them lead productive lives. Our children truly are an investment in the future, and all of those who have participated in mentoring know that it is an investment that pays off greatly.

Since 1904, Big Brothers Big Sisters has been enabling Americans to make this investment—hundreds of thousands of times over, one child at a time. We thank Big Brothers Big Sisters for the magnificent contribution they have made to our country and we look forward to many more years of continuing success.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. 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 Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 41.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAYOR TONY ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL POST OFFICE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1236) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 750 4th Street in Sparks, Nevada, as the ''Mayor Tony Armstrong Memorial Post Office''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1236

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

SECTION 1. MAYOR TONY ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL POST OFFICE.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 750 4th Street in Sparks, Nevada, shall be known and designated as the ''Mayor Tony Armstrong Memorial Post Office''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Mayor Tony Armstrong Memorial Post Office''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1236, the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Mr. Speaker, this post office naming legislation honors a wonderful civic leader. Tony Armstrong had served as mayor of Sparks, Nevada, since being first elected in 1999. Sadly, Mayor Armstrong passed away on January 29 from complications due to a December surgery to remove his spleen. He was 59 years of age. H.R. 1256 will name a post office in his honor in his hometown of Sparks, and I support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, with the exception of a 6-year stint in the Nevada Air National Guard during the 1960s, Tony Armstrong had lived in Sparks since the age of 4. In 1989, he was elected to the Sparks City Council, where he served until becoming mayor in 1999. He was a man whose passionate principles shaped his leadership. As his former colleague on the city council, Councilman Mike Carrigan said, ''Mayor Armstrong's priorities were God first, his family second, and the City of Sparks third.

Mayor Armstrong is survived by his beloved wife, Debby, and his adult children Richard, Keith and Misti. Our hearts and prayers go out to the entire Armstrong family.

Mr. Speaker, I know that my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) was very close with Mayor Armstrong. They grew up together and they have served the people of Nevada together. I thank the gentleman for honoring his friend, Tony Armstrong, by dedicating this post office in his honor, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 1236.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. As a member of the House Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in consideration of H.R. 1236, legislation designating the postal facility in Sparks, Nevada, after the late Tony Armstrong, mayor of Sparks. This measure, which was introduced by our colleague, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) on March 2005, enjoys the support and co-sponsorship of the entire Nevada State delegation.

Tony Armstrong grew up in Sparks, Nevada, and after serving in the Nevada Air National Guard and opening a general contracting business, he was elected in 1989 to the Sparks City Council, representing Ward Three. Ten years later, in 1999, he was elected mayor of Sparks. During his tenure as mayor, he worked hard to promote the image of his city. Sadly, he passed away on January 29, 2005. Mayor Armstrong left behind his wife, two sons, and a daughter.

Mr. Speaker, I urge swift passage of this bill and note that it is definitely a way to honor the work of the mayor of Sparks, Nevada.

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

□ 1515

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS).

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) for yielding me this time to speak on H.R. 1236.

It is both with pride and sadness that I rise today in support of H.R. 1236, the Mayor Tony Armstrong Memorial Post Office Designation Act.

Tony Armstrong and his family moved to Sparks, Nevada, from California when he was just 4 years old. Tony made Sparks his home until his untimely death in January of this year. Tony and I met as young kids, and typical of all kids, created trouble for our parents in Sparks, Nevada.

We both graduated from Sparks High School, and while I served in the United States Air Force, Tony Armstrong served in the Nevada Air National Guard during the Vietnam War. Tony Armstrong served his country honorably and then turned his efforts to serving his beloved hometown of Sparks, Nevada.

In 1970, Tony Armstrong served as the chief deputy building inspector for Washoe County, Nevada, and later opened a general contracting business, which would become the largest and oldest home inspection service in Nevada.

In 1983, Tony was fortunate: he married Debbie Rimbey and was later blessed with two sons and a daughter. After a successful business career, Tony Armstrong turned his attention to becoming a public servant. He was elected to serve on the Sparks City Council in 1989 and was elected mayor a decade later. Over the years, no one has worked harder or loved that community more than Tony Armstrong.

The day before Mayor Armstrong died, he was awarded Civic Leader of the Year by the Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, as a fitting tribute, H.R. 1236 would name the main post office in Sparks, Nevada, the Mayor Tony Armstrong Memorial Post Office. The post office that will receive this designation sits directly across the street from City Hall, the place where Tony Armstrong worked tirelessly. City Hall is a different place today without Tony's Hawaiian shirts passing through the hallways and his smiles greeting anyone and everyone who walked into his office. Mayor Armstrong may best be remembered for ensuring that visitors to Sparks City Hall would always be reminded that God blesses America. When told that the word God would have to be cut from all signs posted in City Hall, Tony made his own signs and posted them around the building. He declared, I guess I am just an old redneck Nevadan because I want my sign to say God bless America.

The people of Sparks have lost a gentleman, a patriot, and a servant of the people; and I have lost a dear friend. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1236, which will honor this extraordinary man, a man who put God, his family, and the citizens of Sparks above himself, a man who went above and beyond for his country, for his State, and for his community. I ask all Members to support H.R. 1236.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS) for his reflections of his friend, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1236.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ED EILERT POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1524) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 12433 Antioch Road in Overland Park, Kansas, as the ''Ed Eilert Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1524

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

SECTION 1. ED EILERT POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 12433 Antioch Road in Overland Park, Kansas, shall be known and designated as the ''Ed Eilert Post Office Building''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Ed Eilert Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 1524 designates this postal facility in Overland Park, Kansas, as the Ed Eilert Post Office Building. The four members of the Kansas State congressional delegation have all endorsed this legislation, and I join them in support of the bill.

After more than a quarter of a century, Ed Eilert stepped down from being a leader in Overland Park government on Monday, April 11. Ed Eilert's public service career began when he was elected to the Overland Park City Council in 1977. In 1981, he was elected to the first of six terms as mayor of Overland Park that spanned 24 years. Overland Park has doubled in population and become Kansas' second largest city under Mayor Eilert's direction. Without question, Ed Eilert is a one-man institution in east central Kansas. This post office on Antioch Road is a natural and deserved commemoration of Mayor Eilert's legacy and distinguished leadership.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Members of the House, I congratulate Mayor Ed Eilert on his tremendous tenure in local government and wish him the very best in retirement. I applaud the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) for working toward passage of H.R. 1524.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Committee on Government Reform, I am pleased to join in the consideration of H.R. 1524, legislation designating a postal facility in Overland Park, Kansas, after Mayor Ed Eilert. This measure, which was introduced by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) on April 6, 2005, enjoys the support and cosponsorship of the entire Kansas State delegation.

Ed Eilert was first elected in 1981. As mayor of Overland Park for 24 years, he worked hard to improve the condition of his city. The population has doubled, the number of projects tripled, and the number of hotels has increased dramatically. Business and opportunities have also grown. A convention center is now home to Overland Park, and more hospitals have been added. Overland Park is now Kansas' second largest city.

The growth occurred under the leadership and vision of Mayor Eilert. This week Mayor Eilert steps down from his position, and what a wonderful way to honor the achievements of Ed Eilert. I join my colleagues in honoring Mayor Ed Eilert and urge the swift passage of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE).

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation designating the United States Postal Service facility located at 12433 Antioch Road in Overland Park, Kansas, as the Ed Eilert Post Office Building. I was joined in sponsoring this legislation by the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN), and the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN); and I am grateful for their support.

Recently, an era came to an end in Overland Park. Mayor Ed Eilert stepped down as mayor, an office to which he was elected six times and held for a total of 24 years. Since he was sworn into office in 1981, Overland Park has grown to become Kansas' second largest city. Its population has nearly double to over 165,000. The number of people working within the city limits has more than tripled with roughly 120,000 jobs in Overland Park today, and hotel capacity has increased from 800 rooms to 5,100 rooms.

During his tenure, 21,000 single-family and 19,000 multi-family residences have been added in Overland Park, along with 23.7 million square feet of office, retail, and industrial space.

Over the years, the city has seen the arrival of the Sprint campus, three new hospitals, the University of Kansas Edwards campus, the Carlsen Center at Johnson County Community College, and a city convention center.

Additionally, under Ed Eilert 's leadership, the city added the landmark Clock Tower Plaza and the Farmers Market in the downtown area, a neighborhood conservation program, and Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, the International Trade Center, the W. Jack Sanders Justice Center, and interchanges at I–435 at both Nall Avenue and Quivira Road.

Mayor Eilert also supported construction of the Fire Training Center which has been used by many other cities and county fire departments in the Kansas City metropolitan area, and he worked with Johnson County Community College to create a training facility for Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway employees on the college campus.

And during Mayor Eilert's tenure, the city's land area expanded by 36 percent to nearly 62 square miles. Finally, Overland Park enjoys a top rating for a solid financial condition. It has received numerous awards as an outstanding city. For years, Overland Park has had the lowest property tax rate of any first-class city in Kansas.

Ed Eilert was first elected to Overland Park City Council in 1977 and became council president in 1980. He formerly taught at Shawnee Mission North High School and knows firsthand how Overland Park has benefited from its nationally recognized school systems.

He made his first visit to the city in 1960 because it was the home of Jan Bush, whom he met while studying at Emporia State University and would marry 2 years later. The Eilerts moved to Overland Park in 1965 when he completed graduate school. In 1977, he began his first campaign for political office and has been a public servant since then. He has also been a financial consultant with A.G. Edwards & Sons and serves on the board of directors of Metcalf Bank.

When we consider the array of challenges that Ed Eilert faced in his 24 years as mayor of Overland Park, Members cannot help but agree with Bob Sigmund, the opinion page editor of the Johnson County Sun who recently wrote that ''Ed Eilert provided the vision and leadership in shaping Overland Park's success as an ideal place to live, work and raise a family. Eilert's political skills have been especially useful in easing tensions and maintaining an acceptable balance between the older, established neighborhoods in northern Overland Park and the rapidly expanding new subdivisions in the south.''

I am proud to call Ed Eilert my friend. While we are members of different political parties, I have always been impressed by his sound judgment, diligence, and dedication to his community and to the public welfare. When he sought the Republican nomination for the House in 1996, he lost narrowly to then-State Representative Vince Snowbarger for the nomination to succeed Representative Jan Meyers. I often tell third district residents that I would have not sought election to Congress myself had Ed Eilert been elected 2 years before I became a candidate for the office.

Dedication of this postal service facility in Overland Park is a small, but fitting, tribute to a man who has dedicated most of his adult life to public service at the community level. He has worked tirelessly to bring people together while ensuring quality economic development and competence in the delivery of local services. I commend Mayor Ed Eilert and again thank my colleagues in the Kansas House delegation for their support. I urge my colleagues to approve this legislation today, and I hope the other body will follow suit quickly so we can see it signed into law.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1524. I thank my colleague, Mr. MOORE, for sponsoring this legislation to name the post office at 12433 Antioch Road in Overland Park after long-time Mayor Ed Eilert.

The job of mayor is a challenging position. Each day they are tasked with the responsibility of making their community, their home, a better place to live. They do this with the eye of the public always on them as they live and work in that community. The fact that May Eilert was re-elected six times speaks volumes of his dedication and character. During his over 24 years in office, Mayor Eilert worked hard to improve Overland Park, and his leadership is well respected.

Mr. MOORE spoke of the infrastructure improvements that Mr. Eilert helped bring to Overland Park—the Clock Tower Plaza, KU's Edwards Campus and the Fire Training Center, to name a few. I want to emphasize that these centers and buildings are much more than physical structures. They are symbols of economic development, job creation and improvements in quality of life. During the time Ed served as Mayor, Overland Park grew to be the second-largest city in Kansas. Ed's vision helped to ensure that the city is both bigger and better for the businesses, individuals and families who are proud to call Overland Park their home.

Mayor Eilert's commitment to Overland Park extended beyond his role as mayor. He was an active member of many civic organizations including the League of Kansas Municipalities and the National League of Cities. He has also served as secretary and treasurer of the Johnson/Wyandotte Counties Council of Mayors. He currently serves as a commissioner of the Kansas and Missouri Metropolitan Cultural District, a board member of Services for Seniors and Advocates for Citizens with Retardation, a member of the advisory council for Emporia State University's school of business and a member of the advisory council for United Community Services and Temporary Lodging for Children.

Mayor Eilert is a charter member of the South Overland Park Rotary Club, the Overland Park Historical Society, the Overland Park Arboretum and Friends of Johnson County Developmental Supports. He also is a member and elder, and a former chairman of the board, of Overland Park Christian Church. I commend Ed for his service to the community and his contributions to improving the quality of life in Overland Park.

I recognize that Kansas is home to many leaders who work to make our state a great place to live and work. I also acknowledge that our growth and prosperity is possible because of the efforts of local leaders like Mayor Eilert who are willing to serve our communities. Mayor Eilert touched lives every day. He directly affected the residents of Overland Park in a positive way. I am grateful for his hard work and dedication, and I join with my fellow Kansas representatives in honoring Mayor Eilert.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) for his reflections of his friend, urge passage of the bill; and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1524.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING CONTRIBUTIONS OF INDIAN AMERICANS TO ECONOMIC INNOVATION AND SOCIETY GENERALLY

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 227) recognizing and honoring the contributions of Indian Americans to economic innovation and society generally.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 227

Whereas the United States is deeply enriched by its Indian American residents;

Whereas the Indian American community and the graduates of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) in the United States have made valuable and significant contributions to society in every profession and discipline; and

Whereas IIT graduates are highly committed and dedicated to research, innovation, and promotion of trade and international cooperation between India and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the valuable and significant contributions of Indian Americans to American society;

(2) honors the economic innovation attributable to graduates of the Indian Institutes of Technology; and

(3) urges all Americans to recognize the contributions of Indian Americans and have a greater appreciation of the role Indian Americans have played in helping to advance and enrich American society.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which 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 Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 227, which I introduced to recognize the contributions to our Nation of Indian Americans, and specifically the graduates of the Indian Institutes of Technology.

After winning independence in 1947, India began building a democratic nation to provide its citizens with equal opportunities.

□ 1530

One of the successes of the new nation was the Indian Institute of Technology, or IIT, which was established in Kharagpur in May, 1950. Today there are seven IIT campuses across India. IITs have become synonymous with excellence in technology and engineering education.

Since the inception of IIT, thousands of graduates have sought and achieved the highest levels of professional successes in the United States and indeed throughout the world. IIT graduates are estimated to have stimulated the creation of over 150,000 jobs in the U.S. Most Silicon Valley firms have at least one IIT graduate among their top executives. In my district in Northern Virginia, we literally have dozens of IIT executives running their own companies, producing thousands of jobs. Almost all IIT alumni attribute their success to the rigorous educational foundation they received at IIT.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has attracted more IIT graduates than any other country because we remain on the cutting edge of the science and technology fields. In recognition of IIT graduates' contributions to our Nation, the second Global IIT Alumni Conference will be held in nearby Bethesda, Maryland from May 20 through 22. The conference will attract over 1,500 attendees from all over the United States and around the world.

Mr. Speaker I am pleased that the House is recognizing the achievements of Indian Americans and IIT graduates in helping to make the United States the global leader it is. Indian Americans are wonderful ambassadors of their homeland, and they strengthen the strong friendship between India and the United States, the two largest democratic nations in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join me in recognition of the important contributions made by Indian Americans and IIT graduates to our national economy. I thank the House India Caucus and all the cosponsors for their support of this resolution.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is important that we acknowledge from time to time our individual histories and what makes us unique. I believe that it is our differences that make our Nation strong. Therefore, I am very happy to join the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, in support of H. Res. 227, recognizing and honoring the contributions of Indian Americans to economic innovation and to society generally.

According to a 2000 census, the Indian American population stands at over 1.6 million. This represents a 106 percent increase over the 1990 census figures. In fact, Indian Americans are the largest-growing Asian American community in the United States.

In addition to being a growing community within our society, the Indian American population also is a wonderful contributor to our Nation's well-being. The Indian American median family income is $60,093, which is significantly higher than the national median family income of $38,885. This high-income level is not only an example of their determination and hard work, but it is also a testament to the strong regard they hold for education. More than 87 percent of Indian Americans have completed high school, while at least 62 percent have completed some college. The value that members of the Indian American community place on education allows them and helps them to succeed in this country and to become positive role models and economic forces for all of us.

As our Nation struggles to teach the value of education to our young, I strongly believe that we should hold in high regard the Indian American community's commitment to higher education. It is indeed inspirational. So once again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) for his leadership on this issue and reiterate my strong support for H. Res. 227.

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

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JINDAL).

Mr. JINDAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of what I think is a very appropriate resolution.

I am very proud to be the son of Indian immigrants to this country. Though born and raised in Louisiana, I am very proud of their background. Certainly I think not only my parents but the interior Indian American community is a great example of living the American dream. And so many stories have been told, and there are so many wonderful examples.

Certainly we can talk in terms of numbers. We can talk in terms of the IIT graduates who are now doing so well in Fortune 500 companies in this country. Certainly we can talk about the academic achievements. We can talk about the contributions to our high-tech industry in this country. We can talk about the contributions in medicine, in small business ownership. And the numbers are phenomenal. One of the most successful, if not the most successful, immigrant group. But I do not think the numbers tell the entire story. I think sometimes we have to look beyond the numbers and hear the personal stories.

My father, for example, is one of nine children, the first one in his family and the only one to go to high school, much less beyond high school. I am certainly very proud of everything my father has accomplished in this country. But it is not just my father. I am very proud of all the different Indian Americans I have the privilege of meeting who have achieved so much in their respective fields, and again I think a wonderful example of the American dream, a wonderful example that in this country we do provide opportunity if one works hard and pursues that education.

I often tease my parents. Mark Twain said that the older we become, the smarter our fathers become, the smarter our parents become. And I tease my parents because, now being the father of two children, I appreciate more and more what my parents have sacrificed, what they have endured and what they have accomplished. I appreciate more the significance of the accomplishments of the Indian American community. Some of those things we took for granted. I did, anyway, growing up. We did not really realize the significance of those struggles, those sacrifices, and how remarkable have been their collective and individual achievements.

Again, it is hard to exaggerate. The Indian American population numbers, according to census numbers, 1½ million people in this country. We are talking about the Indians in America, 87 percent have completed high school, almost two-thirds have at least some college education. Remarkable numbers, remarkable contributions. But, again, the numbers do not tell the entire story.

In my State, Indian American physicians serve some of the neediest areas, allow emergency rooms to stay open, provide primary care to those who would not otherwise have access to care. The numbers are amazing; 300,000 Indian Americans working in Silicon Valley, 750 of those companies headed by people of Indian American descent, responsible for 15 percent of the high-tech startups in the area.

Again when we look at the numbers, they tell an amazing story, but it is not just the numbers. Again, in my

home State, in my home district, Indian Americans own businesses in the biggest cities to the smallest communities, the most rural parts of my State, employing thousands of my citizens, of my constituents. So, again, I think it is a wonderful success story.

I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman TOM DAVIS) for highlighting, through this resolution, the accomplishments of the Indian American people.

But I will just remind my colleagues two things in closing: One, it is my belief that the Indian American success story is a great testimony to the strength of the American dream, that the American dream is alive and well. One of the reasons I was so passionate to become a Member of this body was to nurture that dream for our children, to make sure that all of our children continue to have the same opportunities that brought my parents and others like them here in the first place. And, secondly, to say it is not just the numbers. It is not just the IIT graduates. It is not just the high-tech startups. It is not just the educational achievement. It is also the personal stories. Stories like my dad's, and others like him, who have not only done so well but have given so their kids and others around them might have a better quality of life.

Again, I want to thank the chairman and my colleagues for sponsoring and supporting this resolution. I am very proud to not only cosponsor the resolution but to be a part of a community that is so grateful and has done so much to contribute to this country.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to thank the gentleman from Illinois on the other side of the aisle for helping us bring this bill to the floor and the gentleman from Louisiana, a Rhodes scholar and one who has brought credit to his heritage, to his State, and this body by serving here.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 227, which would honor the contributions of Indian Americans in the field of information technology.

Like so many other groups, Indian Americans lend creativity, technical expertise, and innovation to their chosen fields. Every day, they show their dedication not only to improving the economy and competitiveness of this country, but to advancing a positive relationship between the United States and India.

This resolution presents us with an opportunity to thank those who have such an important impact on our society. Indian Americans have created thousands of jobs in the U.S. and hold senior positions at Fortune 500 companies, national labs, universities, and venture capital firms. And through their work as economists, researchers, educators, and social and political leaders, they have ensured that their extraordinary commitment will benefit not only this generation, but the next, as well.

That is why I support this resolution. The cornerstone of our society was built on the contributions of many groups who brought intelligence and originality to their work in this country. And that is why I urge my colleagues to join me today in thanking Indian Americans by recognizing their contributions to information technology.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, as the former Co-Chair of the Caucus on India and Indian Americans and the representative of one of the largest concentrations of Indian Americans in the United States, I have seen firsthand the contributions my friends from India have made.

I commend my colleague and good friend Rep. TOM DAVIS (R–VA) for introducing this legislation and talking about the contributions of Indian Americans. Representing the second highest concentration of Indian Americans in the country, I have seen for myself on 74th Street in Jackson Heights, Queens how successful and industrious Indian Americans are. That recipe for success starts with institutions like the Indian Institute of Technology, which we recognize today, and the far-reaching success of their graduates.

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) has had a long history of grooming fine minds that have gone on to achieve incredible success in India and around the world.

The first IIT was established in 1950 in Kharagpur and now 50 plus years later they have a total of seven institutes, with the newest one established by recognizing University of Roorkee, one of Asia's oldest engineering institutions, as IIT Roorkee. Many of the top Indians in industry have graduated from India's prestigious Indian Institute of Technology, like Vinod Khosla, founder of Sun Microsystems, to Rajat Gupta, the first non North America born head of the venerable consulting company McKinsey & Co.

I have had an opportunity to meet many graduates of IIT and all have spoken about the benefits of attending the institute.

I believe in today's current educational environment in the United States we can learn from the history of how the Indian government went about establishing this institute. After the Indians gained their independence from the British, they formed committees to explore ways of creating an educated class of people to move the country forward.

What they found was that to be competitive in the world they needed to excel in technology and engineering, which is where we in the United States find ourselves to be lacking today. We need to follow the example of our Indian friends and the example we set in the 1960's and create a national strategy to make the way we teach our children in the United States more focused on the math and sciences so we are not left behind.

Instead of fearing India as an economic competitor, we should be embracing India as an economic and political ally. The over 1 billion consumers in India and the market for U.S. goods and services in India allows for unprecedented opportunities for American companies, and job growth for Americans.

I want to thank Mr. DAVIS for introducing this resolution and urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a co-sponsor of H. Res. 227 to honor all that Indian Americans have contributed to our country. Specifically, I would like to commend the graduates of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) for their economic innovations and technological expertise.

After India gained its independence and began its new life as a democratic nation, a committee was formed to create institutes of higher education that would focus on technology to fuel the post-war industrial development of India. After looking at the committee recommendations, the first Indian Institute of Technology was created in May 1950. The campus was placed at the site of the Hijli Detention camp, which used to house young Indian freedom fighters during the independence movement.

Since that time 6 more campuses have been formed throughout India. IIT offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in more than 25 engineering, science, technology and management disciplines. Students are admitted after taking a national entrance exam and the student body is a diverse mixture of socio-economic backgrounds, cultures, languages, and religions.

After graduating from IIT, alumni are able to take the knowledge they gained and excel in technology and engineering sectors. Graduates are currently serving in senior positions at Citigroup and Sun Microsystems, among other established and Fortune 500 companies. They are also serving as Deans and Professors at the best universities in the United States, including Harvard, MIT and Carnegie Mellon.

The United States economy has felt the impact of IIT graduates. Over 25 percent of graduates since 1990 have been entrepreneurs and have started numerous companies that have fueled job creation in their communities. IIT alumni are also performing cutting edge research that is needed by U.S. companies, and a great number have received patents for their innovations.

The effect of Indian Institute of Technology graduates is felt here in the United States and throughout the world. It is important that all Americans recognize the great impact Indian Americans and IIT graduates have had on our society and economy. Without their knowledge, skill, and drive to achieve, our economy would not have as many technological innovations which enrich our daily lives.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 227.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PRESIDENTIAL $1 COIN ACT OF 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 902) to improve circulation of the $1 coin, create a new bullion coin, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 902

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 ''Presidential $1 Coin Act of 2005''.

TITLE I—PRESIDENTIAL $1 COINS

SEC. 101. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) There are sectors of the United States economy, including public transportation, parking meters, vending machines and low-dollar value transactions, in which the use of a $1 coin is both useful and desirable for keeping costs and prices down.

(2) For a variety of reasons, the new $1 coin introduced in 2000 has not been widely sought-after by the public, leading to higher costs for merchants and thus higher prices for consumers.

(3) The success of the 50 States Commemorative Coin Program for circulating quarter dollars shows that a design on a United States circulating coin that is regularly changed in a manner similar to the systematic change in designs in such Program radically increases demand for the coin, rapidly pulling it through the economy.

(4) The 50 States Commemorative Coin Program also has been an educational tool, teaching both Americans and visitors something about each State for which a quarter has been issued.

(5) A national survey and study by the Government Accountability Office has indicated that many Americans who do not seek, or who reject, the new $1 coin for use in commerce would actively seek the coin if an attractive, educational rotating design were to be struck on the coin.

(6) The President is the leader of our tripartite government and the President's spouse has often set the social tone for the White House while spearheading and highlighting important issues for the country.

(7) Sacagawea, as currently represented on the new $1 coin, is an important symbol of American history.

(8) Many people cannot name all of the Presidents, and fewer can name the spouses, nor can many people accurately place each President in the proper time period of American history.

(9) First Spouses have not generally been recognized on American coinage.

(10) In order to revitalize the design of United States coinage and return circulating coinage to its position as not only a necessary means of exchange in commerce but also as an object of aesthetic beauty in its own right, it is appropriate to move many of the mottos and emblems, the inscription of the year, and the so-called ''mint marks'' that currently appear on the 2 faces of each circulating coin to the edge of the coin, which would allow larger and more dramatic artwork on the coins reminiscent of the so-called ''Golden Age of Coinage'' in the United States, at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, initiated by President Theodore Roosevelt, with the assistance of noted sculptors and medallic artists James Earle Fraser and Augustus Saint-Gaudens.

(11) Placing inscriptions on the edge of coins, known as edge-incusing, is a hallmark of modern coinage and is common in large-volume production of coinage elsewhere in the world, such as the 2,700,000,000 2-Euro coins in circulation, but it has not been done on a large scale in United States coinage in recent years.

(12) Although the Congress has authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to issue gold coins with a purity of 99.99 percent, the Secretary has not done so.

(13) Bullion coins are a valuable tool for the investor and, in some cases, an important aspect of coin collecting.

SEC. 102. PRESIDENTIAL $1 COIN PROGRAM.

Section 5112 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subsection (m) the following new subsection:

''(n) REDESIGN AND ISSUANCE OF CIRCULATING $1 COINS HONORING EACH OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES.—

''(1) REDESIGN BEGINNING IN 2007.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding subsection (d) and in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, $1 coins issued during the period beginning January 1, 2007, and ending upon the termination of the program under paragraph (6) shall have designs on the obverse selected in accordance with paragraph (2)(B) which are emblematic of the Presidents of the United States and a design on the reverse selected in accordance with paragraph (2)(A).

''(B) CONTINUITY PROVISION.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall continue to mint and issue $1 coins which bear the design on $1 coins being minted and issued before the issuance of coins as required under this subsection.

''(2) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—The $1 coins issued in accordance with paragraph (1)(A) shall meet the following design requirements:

''(A) COIN REVERSE.—The design on the reverse shall bear—

''(i) a likeness of the Statue of Liberty extending to the rim of the coin and large enough to provide a dramatic representation of Liberty while not being large enough to create the impression of a '2-headed' coin;

''(ii) the inscription '$1' ; and

''(iii) the inscription 'United States of America'.

''(B) COIN OBVERSE.—The design on the obverse shall contain the name and likeness of a President of the United States and basic information about the President, including the dates or years of the term of office of such President and a number indicating the order of the period of service in which the President served.

''(C) EDGE-INCUSED INSCRIPTIONS.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—The inscription of the year of minting or issuance of the coin and the inscriptions 'E Pluribus Unum' and 'In God We Trust' shall be edge-incused into the coin.

''(ii) PRESERVATION OF DISTINCTIVE EDGE.—The edge-incusing of the inscriptions under clause (i) on coins issued under this subsection shall be done in a manner that preserves the distinctive edge of the coin so that the denomination of the coin is readily discernible, including by individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

''(D) INSCRIPTIONS OF 'LIBERTY'.—Notwithstanding the 2d sentence of subsection (d)(1), because the use of a design bearing the likeness of the Statue of Liberty on the reverse of the coins issued under this subsection adequately conveys the concept of Liberty, the inscription of 'Liberty' shall not appear on the coins.

''(E) PROHIBITION ON SITTING PRESIDENT IN SERIES.—No coin issued under this subsection may bear the image of a President who, at the time of issuance, is currently serving as President.

''(3) ISSUANCE OF COINS COMMEMORATING PRESIDENTS.—

''(A) ORDER OF ISSUANCE.—The coins issued under this subsection commemorating Presidents of the United States shall be issued in the order of the period of service of each President, beginning with President George Washington.

''(B) TREATMENT OF PERIOD OF SERVICE.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), only 1 coin design shall be issued for a period of service for any President, no matter how many consecutive terms of office the President served.

''(ii) NONCONSECUTIVE TERMS.—If a President has served during 2 or more nonconsecutive periods of service, a coin shall be issued under this subsection for each such nonconsecutive period of service.

''(4) ISSUANCE OF COINS COMMEMORATING 4 PRESIDENTS DURING EACH YEAR OF THE PERIOD.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The designs for the $1 coins issued during each year of the period referred to in paragraph (1) shall be emblematic of 4 Presidents until each President has been so honored, subject to paragraph (2)(E).

''(B) NUMBER OF 4 CIRCULATING COIN DESIGNS IN EACH YEAR.—The Secretary shall prescribe, on the basis of such factors as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, the number of $1 coins that shall be issued with each of the designs selected for each year of the period referred to in paragraph (1).

''(5) ISSUANCE OF NUMISMATIC COINS.—The Secretary may mint and issue such number of $1 coins of each design selected under this subsection in uncirculated and proof qualities as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

''(6) TERMINATION OF PROGRAM.—The issuance of coins under this subsection shall terminate when each President has been so honored, subject to paragraph (2)(E), and may not be resumed except by an Act of Congress.

''(7) REVERSION TO PRECEDING DESIGN.—Upon the termination of the issuance of coins under this subsection, the design of all $1 coins shall revert to the the so-called 'Sacagawea-design' $1 coins.''.

SEC. 103. FIRST SPOUSE BULLION COIN PROGRAM.

Section 5112 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by inserting after subsection (n) (as added by the preceding section of this title) the following new subsection:

''(o) FIRST SPOUSE BULLION COIN PROGRAM.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—During the same period in which the $1 coins are issued under subsection (n) which are emblematic of the Presidents of the United States, the Secretary of the Treasury shall issue bullion coins under this subsection that are emblematic of the spouse of each such President.

''(2) SPECIFICATIONS.—The coins issued under this subsection shall—

''(A) have the same diameter as the $1 coins described in subsection (n);

''(B) weigh 0.5 ounce; and

''(C) contain 99.99 percent pure gold.

''(3) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

''(A) COIN OBVERSE.—The design on the obverse of each coin issued under this subsection shall contain—

''(i) the name and likeness of a person who was a spouse of a President during the President's period of service;

''(ii) an inscription of the years during which such person was the spouse of a President during the President's period of service; and

''(iii) the number indicating the order of the period of service in which such President served.

''(B) COIN REVERSE.—The design on the reverse of each coin issued under this subsection shall bear—

''(i) images emblematic of the life and work of the First Spouse whose image is borne on the obverse; and

''(ii) the inscription 'United States of America'.

''(C) DESIGNATED DENOMINATION.—Each coin issued under this subsection shall bear, on the reverse, an inscription of the nominal denomination of the coin which shall be '$10'.

''(D) DESIGN IN CASE OF NO FIRST SPOUSE.—In the case of any President who served without a spouse—

''(i) the image on the obverse of the bullion coin corresponding to the $1 coin relating to such President shall be an image emblematic of the concept of 'Liberty'—

''(I) as represented on a United States coin issued during the period of service of such President; or

''(II) as represented, in the case of President Chester Alan Arthur, by a design incorporating the name and likeness of Alice Paul, a leading strategist in the suffrage movement, who was instrumental in gaining women the right to vote upon the adoption of the 19th amendment and thus participate in the election of future Presidents, and who was born on January 11, 1885, during the term of President Arthur; and

''(ii) the reverse of such bullion coin shall be of a design representative of themes of such President, except that in the case of the bullion coin referred to in clause (i)(II) the reverse of such coin shall be representative of the suffrage movement.

''(E) DESIGN AND COIN FOR EACH SPOUSE.—A separate coin shall be designed and issued under this section for each person who was the spouse of a President during any portion of a term of office of such President.

''(F) INSCRIPTIONS.—Each bullion coin issued under this subsection shall bear the inscription of the year of minting or issuance of the coin and such other inscriptions as the Secretary may determine to be appropriate.

''(4) SALE OF BULLION COINS.—Each bullion coin issued under this subsection shall be sold for an amount the Secretary of the Treasury determines to be appropriate that is equal to or greater than the sum of—

''(A) the face value of the coins; and

''(B) the cost of designing and issuing the coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, marketing, and shipping).

''(5) ISSUANCE OF COINS COMMEMORATING FIRST SPOUSES.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—The bullion coins issued under this subsection with respect to any spouse of a President shall be issued on the same schedule as the $1 coin issued under subsection (n) with respect to such President.

''(B) MAXIMUM NUMBER OF BULLION COINS FOR EACH DESIGN.—The Secretary shall—

''(i) prescribe, on the basis of such factors as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, the maximum number of bullion coins that shall be issued with each of the designs selected under this subsection; and

''(ii) announce, before the issuance of the bullion coins of each such design, the maximum number of bullion coins of that design that will be issued.

''(C) TERMINATION OF PROGRAM.—No bullion coin may be issued under this subsection after the termination, in accordance with subsection (n)(6), of the $1 coin program established under subsection (n).

''(6) QUALITY OF COINS.—The bullion coins shall be issued in both proof and uncirculated qualities.

''(7) SOURCE OF GOLD BULLION.—The Secretary shall acquire gold for the coins issued under this subsection by purchase of gold mined from natural deposits in the United States, or in a territory or possession of the United States, within 1 year after the month in which the ore from which it is derived was mined. The Secretary shall pay not more than the average world price for the gold.

''(8) BRONZE MEDALS.—The Secretary may strike and sell bronze medals that bear the likeness of the bullion coins authorized under this subsection, at a price, size, and weight, and with such inscriptions, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.''.

SEC. 104. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that—

(1) the enactment of this Act will serve to increase the use of $1 coins generally, which will increase the circulation of the so-called ''Sacagawea-design'' $1 coins that have been and will continue to be minted and issued;

(2) the continued minting and issuance of the so-called ''Sacagawea-design'' $1 coins will serve as a lasting tribute to the role of women and Native Americans in the history of the United States;

(3) while the American tradition of not issuing a coin with the image of a living person has served the country well and deserves to be continued as a general practice, in a series of coins commemorating former Presidents, all former Presidents should be so honored notwithstanding such tradition;

(4) the full circulation potential and cost-savings benefit projections for the $1 coins are not likely to be achieved unless the coins are delivered in ways useful to ordinary commerce;

(5) in order for the circulation of $1 coins to achieve maximum potential—

(A) the coins should be as attractive as possible; and

(B) the Director of the United States Mint should take all reasonable steps to ensure that all $1 coins minted and issued remain tarnish-free for as long as possible without incurring undue expense;

(6) if the Secretary of the Treasury determines to include on any $1 coin minted under section 5112(n) of title 31, United States Code (as added by section 102 of this Act) a mark denoting the United States Mint facility at which the coin was struck, such mark should be edge-incused;

(7) at such time as the Secretary of Treasury determines to be appropriate, and after consultation with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the submission of notice to the Congress, the Secretary should declare to be obsolete any circulating $1 coin that bears the design of the $1 coins being issued immediately before the issuance of coins with the design referred to in section 5112(n)(7) of title 31, United States Code;

(8) in connection with the introduction of the $1 coins under the Presidential $1 Coin Program—

(A) the coins should not be introduced with an overly expensive taxpayer-funded public relations campaign; and

(B) the Director of the United States Mint, a bureau in the Department of the Treasury, should work with consumer groups, media outlets, and schools to ensure an adequate amount of news coverage about the start of the coin program so consumers will know of the availability of the coins;

(9) the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and the Secretary of the Treasury should take steps to ensure that an adequate supply of $1 coins are available for commerce and collectors at such places and in such quantities as are appropriate by—

(A) meeting, from time to time but no less frequently than quarterly, with a coin users group that includes representatives of merchants who would benefit from the increased usage of $1 coins, vending machine and other coin acceptor manufacturers, vending machine owners and operators, transit officials, municipal parking officials, depository institutions, coin and currency handlers, armored-car operators, car wash operators, and coin collectors and dealers to accurately gauge demand for coins and to anticipate and eliminate obstacles to the easy and efficient distribution and circulation of $1 coins as well as all other circulating coins;

(B) submitting a semiannual report to the Congress containing an assessment of the remaining obstacles to the efficient and timely circulation of coins, and particularly $1 coins, together with such recommendations for legislative action the Board and the Secretary may determine to be appropriate;

(C) consulting with industry representatives to encourage operators of vending machines and other automated coin-accepting devices in the United States to accept coins issued under the Presidential $1 Coin Program and the so-called ''Sacagawea-design'' $1 coins, and to include notices on the machines and devices of such acceptability;

(D) ensuring that during an introductory period, all institutions that want unmixed supplies of each newly-issued design of $1 coins are able to obtain such unmixed supplies; and

(E) consulting with representatives of depository institutions and armored-car operators to support the availability of $1 coins in packaging of sizes and types appropriate for and useful to ordinary commerce, including rolled coins; and

(10) the Director of the United States Mint should take all steps necessary to expand the marketplace for bullion coins, and reduce barriers to the sale of bullion coins, by ensuring that—

(A) the greatest number possible of reputable, reliable, and responsible dealers are qualified to offer for sale all bullion coins struck and issued by the United States Mint; and

(B) all such dealers and their customers have equal and timely access to all new issues of such bullion coins.

TITLE II—ABRAHAM LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL 1-CENT COIN REDESIGN

SEC. 201. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President, was one of the Nation's greatest leaders, demonstrating true courage during the Civil War, one of the greatest crises in the Nation's history.

(2) Born of humble roots in Hardin County (present-day LaRue County), Kentucky, on February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln rose to the Presidency through a combination of honesty, integrity, intelligence, and commitment to the United States.

(3) With the belief that all men are created equal, Abraham Lincoln led the effort to free all slaves in the United States.

(4) Abraham Lincoln had a generous heart, with malice toward none and with charity for all.

(5) Abraham Lincoln gave the ultimate sacrifice for the country he loved, dying from an assassin's bullet on April 15, 1865.

(6) All Americans could benefit from studying the life of Abraham Lincoln, for Lincoln's life is a model for accomplishing the ''American dream'' through honesty, integrity, loyalty, and a lifetime of education.

(7) The year 2009 will be the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

(8) Abraham Lincoln was born in Kentucky, grew to adulthood in Indiana, achieved fame in Illinois, and led the nation in Washington, D.C.

(9) The so-called ''Lincoln cent'' was introduced in 1909 on the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, making the obverse design the most enduring on the nation's coinage.

(10) President Theodore Roosevelt was so impressed by the talent of Victor David Brenner that the sculptor was chosen to design the likeness of President Lincoln for the coin, adapting a design from a plaque Brenner had prepared earlier.

(11) In the nearly 100 years of production of the ''Lincoln cent'', there have been only 2 designs on the reverse: the original, featuring 2 wheat-heads in memorial style enclosing mottoes, and the current representation of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

(12) On the occasion of the bicentennial of President Lincoln's birth and the 100th anniversary of the production of the Lincoln cent, it is entirely fitting to issue a series of 1-cent coins with designs on the reverse that are emblematic of the 4 major periods of President Lincoln's life.

SEC. 202. REDESIGN OF LINCOLN CENT FOR 2009.

(a) IN GENERAL.—During the year 2009, the Secretary of the Treasury shall issue 1-cent coins in accordance with the following design specifications:

(1) OBVERSE.—The obverse of the 1-cent coin shall continue to bear the Victor David Brenner likeness of President Abraham Lincoln.

(2) REVERSE.—The reverse of the coins shall bear 4 different designs each representing a different aspect of the life of Abraham Lincoln, such as—

(A) his birth and early childhood in Kentucky;

(B) his formative years in Indiana;

(C) his professional life in Illinois; and

(D) his presidency, in Washington, D.C.

(b) ISSUANCE OF REDESIGNED LINCOLN CENTS IN 2009.—

(1) ORDER.—The 1-cent coins to which this section applies shall be issued with 1 of the 4 designs referred to in subsection (a)(2) beginning at the start of each calendar quarter of 2009.

(2) NUMBER.—The Secretary shall prescribe, on the basis of such factors as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, the number of 1-cent coins that shall be issued with each of the designs selected for each calendar quarter of 2009.

(c) DESIGN SELECTION.—The designs for the coins specified in this section shall be chosen by the Secretary—

(1) after consultation with the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts; and

(2) after review by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee.

SEC. 203. REDESIGN OF REVERSE OF 1-CENT COINS AFTER 2009.

The design on the reverse of the 1-cent coins issued after December 31, 2009, shall bear an image emblematic of President Lincoln's preservation of the United States of America as a single and united country.

SEC. 204. NUMISMATIC PENNIES WITH THE SAME METALLIC CONTENT AS THE 1909 PENNY.

The Secretary of the Treasury shall issue 1-cent coins in 2009 with the exact metallic content as the 1-cent coin contained in 1909 in such number as the Secretary determines to be appropriate for numismatic purposes

SEC. 205. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

It is the sense of the Congress that the original Victor David Brenner design for the 1-cent coin was a dramatic departure from previous American coinage that should be reproduced, using the original form and relief of the likeness of Abraham Lincoln, on the 1-cent coins issued in 2009.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to include extraneous material thereon.

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

There was no objection.

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

I am pleased that the House will consider today the Presidential $1 Coin Act of 2005 I authored with the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY). This legislation honors each U.S. President by placing him on the obverse side of the $1 coin on a rotating basis. By doing so it aims to improve circulation of the $1 coin, which will lower costs to businesses and thus restrain price increases. I believe this program is a great opportunity for educating both children and adults about the history of our country. In addition, although it is not the goal of the program, these new coins will likely generate as much as $5 billion for the government.

Concurrently with this program, the current Sacagawea coin will also be minted. I am pleased that we were able to work with the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) to address his concerns and continue the Sacagawea program, which will now hopefully be stronger than ever.

In many ways this legislation is modeled after the successful ''50 State Quarter Program.'' The 50 State Quarter Program, which I was also proud to have authored, issues five quarters a year bearing images connected with one of the States, so that over a decade each State will have been honored. Before the State quarter program started, the U.S. Mint was making about 400 million quarters a year, but in the first year of the 50 State Quarter Program it minted approximately 1.2 billion quarters. The Mint estimates that one person in each household is collecting the quarters and they are collecting a full set, not just their own State. According to the most recent numbers from the Mint, nearly $5 billion worth of savings have been created for the Federal Government.

It is important to note that this program is likely to be more accepted by the public than previous dollar coin programs. In a 2002 General Accounting Office report to Congress, 25 percent of respondents stated that they would use the dollar coin for more purchases if there was a rotating design similar to the 50 State Quarter Program. Additionally, nearly 50 percent of respondents stated they would collect the new coin if it featured a changing design. And 69 percent of respondents favored U.S. Presidents as the choice for the new rotating design on the dollar coin.

Under the program, the images on the front and back of the coin temporarily would be replaced beginning in 2007 with images of the United States Presidents. Four Presidents a year would be honored, in the order of their service, with a likeness of the President, his name and dates of service, and a number signifying the order in which he served, on the front of the coin. The image on the reverse would be that of the Statue of Liberty, large enough to be dramatic but not so large as to create a so-called ''two-headed'' coin. The date, Mint mark, and other important mottos on the coin would be on the edge of the coin, leaving room on the faces for more dramatic artwork.

Working through concerns, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) raised last year, there is language that was drafted in consultation with the National Federation of the Blind to ensure seeing-impaired individuals would be able to distinguish the dollar coin from a quarter.

The educational aspects of this program are obvious. We all know George Washington was the first President, but how many can tell the exact dates of his service to the country? How about the dates of service of the famous Civil War General Ulysses S. Grant, who later became President? And how many in this Chamber can name the only President who would end up with two coins in the series because he served twice, in terms separated by another President's term?

This legislation also seeks to honor the First Spouses by creating a nearly pure-gold investment-grade bullion coin, the same diameter as the dollar coin, and half an ounce in weight, honoring the First Spouses who have done so much for our country. The U.S. Mint will also be able to make bronze medal replicas of the First Spouse gold bullion coin. This will enable school children and ordinary citizens an affordable option for collecting the First Spouse series. These bronze medal replicas will cost just a few dollars.

For the First Spouse coin, the obverse, as for the Presidential coins, would be the likeness of the spouse, terms of service, and the order in which they served. On the reverse would be images emblematic of the spouse's works. In the five instances to date in which Presidents had no spouses while in office, the educational part again, the bill calls for the image on the front of the coin to be that of an image, that of ''Liberty,'' as used on a U.S. coin circulating that President's term, and the reverse of the coin to carry images related to the President's term.

□ 1545

During President Chester Arthur's term, the image of Liberty would be represented by Alice Paul, a leading figure in the women's suffrage movement, who was born during Arthur's term. Other Presidents, such as President Wilson, have had more than one spouse while in office due to the death of a spouse and subsequent remarriage while still in office.

Finally, this legislation includes H.R. 767 as a second title. This legislation, introduced by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) and cosponsored by the entire Illinois delegation, will redesign the Lincoln penny in 2009 in celebration of the 200th anniversary of President Lincoln's birth. The redesign will feature four designs, each representing a different aspect of his life: first, his birth and early childhood in Kentucky; second, his formative years in Indiana; third, his professional life in Illinois; and, finally, his Presidency in Washington, DC.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for her work on this legislation, indeed there was a great deal of work, as well as the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman OXLEY) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), for their support.

I urge my colleagues to support this fun and educational program.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bill that the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and I have offered that is a win-win for taxpayers and the economy.

The Presidential Dollar Coin Act builds on the remarkable success of the 50 State Quarter Act of the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), which is well into its 10-year run and has earned

praise from educators and coin collectors and benefited the Treasury. My daughters, like many young people across America, enjoy collecting this popular coin.

Like the State quarter bill, the Presidential dollar coin will educate Americans about our Presidents and our first ladies while making money for the taxpayers. In addition, this bill will encourage use of the Sacagawea dollar coin, which will continue to be issued throughout the program and will be the sole U.S. dollar coin after the program ends. Thanks to discussions with the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY), Indian tribal chiefs and women's groups, the provisions of the bill relating to the Sacagawea dollar coin have been clarified and strengthened to assure that Sacagawea, the only woman on our currency at this present moment, will continue to be honored on the dollar coin.

In a similar vein, the bill also provides for commemorative coins honoring each first lady to be issued during the period that their husbands were President. These will be issued both as gold bullion collectors' items and also in a bronze version, making them more accessible to school children and the public.

I am particularly pleased that the bill provides for a coin to be issued in honor of the noted suffragette Alice Paul at the same time as the coin commemorating President Chester Arthur, who served without a spouse. As a New Yorker, I am particularly pleased that Lady Liberty, the international symbol of the United States, will be on the back of the coin.

The General Accounting Office has estimated that general use of dollar coins could save the government as much as $500 million per year because they last longer than the dollar bill. Boosting usage of the dollar coin in everyday commerce also helps small businesses and provides consumers with faster and better service.

At the halfway point of issuance, the 50–State Quarter program had made the government over $4 billion primarily from collectors taking the coins out of circulation so that the Federal Reserve then buys more from the Mint. We have similar expectations for the effect of individuals collecting the dollar coins.

This bill earns money for the government, benefits small businesses and consumers, educates all users of American currency about their Presidents and first ladies, and encourages wider use of the Sacagawea dollar coin. I would call that a bill that deserves our full support.

I particularly want to thank the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) for his work, not only on the quarter coin, which has been a huge success for our school children and our Nation and helped our economy, but his leadership and constant work on this bill, along with the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman OXLEY) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

I particularly thank Joe Pinder of the committee staff, who is really an expert on coins and has put a great deal of time and effort on this, along with Emily Pfeiffer from the staff of the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and Eleni Constantin, my financial services counsel.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that this will pass overwhelmingly and be circulating soon.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time, and I am rising today in support of H.R. 902. I congratulate the gentleman from Delaware and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for having worked long and hard on this legislation.

In a Chamber where we find so much to fight about, you might think that a dollar coin commemorating former Presidents would be the ultimate no-brainer; but believe me, I had very deep troubles with this legislation. You see, I represent the State of North Dakota, home of Sacagawea, as we say in Hidatsa, Sacagawea as she is known in the Shoshone language. This coin, the Presidential coin, will come in addition to the existing dollar coin which bears the likeness of Sacagawea.

This occurs at a time when we are recognizing the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and commemorating, in accordance with that remembrance, the role Sacagawea had in this very important expedition.

The State of North Dakota feels very deeply about Sacagawea and about her role in U.S. history. We commemorated not long ago our second statue in Statuary Hall in Sacagawea's likeness. We were concerned that the move to the Presidential coin would somehow phase out the Sacagawea coin or relegate this one coin to history and obscurity. We thought that was not the time to do it, not in the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, not this coin that recognizes the contributions Native American people have made in our history, not the coin that recognizes the role women have played in the history of our country.

So with all of these concerns, I sat down and began my discussions with the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and also many discussions with my friend, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

I am very pleased to say that this was one experience where rather than just being rebuffed with ''forget about your concerns, we have got the votes so we are going to run this,'' there was actual, very sincere listening to our concerns that Sacagawea continue in the coinage of our country. There were sincere efforts to address the issues that we were raising, and let me just cite a couple of them:

First, that the Presidential coins start at the conclusion of the bicentennial observation of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. In addition, that any improvements to the coin to advance the Presidential coins would also be applied to the Sacagawea coin. Specifically, here we are talking about making a coin that will work in vending machines, that has the gold color, yet is not so subject to tarnishing as the existing rendition of the Sacagawea coin.

I think that the bill, as a result of the changes made by the constructive dialogue we were able to maintain, is a better bill; and I am just deeply grateful that on this issue, maybe not of great national importance to many, but of very real importance to me and the people I represent, you paid attention to our concerns, addressed them and came up with what I believe is an acceptable compromise. Maybe we can take this example and export it to other issues before us.

I am deeply grateful to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE). By golly, when the gentleman gets an idea, he just does not let it drop. I was hoping the gentleman would wear out on this one; but, no, he kept pushing, and here we are today and we are going to pass it and are going to pass it with my vote.

So I commend the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), I commend the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), and I thank them once again for the opportunity to work with them on this legislation.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to thank the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) for his constant work on this bill and his support. We are very grateful. I believe the gentleman's input has made it a stronger bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back my time.

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

First, as a comment to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY), he is tenacious, to say the least. We have been going through this with the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) for a year, or something of that nature, addressing a variety of issues.

Obviously, none of us wanted to see the Sacagawea coin not come back or fail or whatever. It will be continued, and I think it is our mutual hope that this program will accelerate the usage of these coins, and therefore it is going to be a coin when it does come back in full-blown issuance after all the Presidential coins are gone that will be used a heck of a lot more than it is now. So hopefully it is a win-win situation that we ended up with.

I thank the gentleman. It was all amiable, maybe a little frustrating at times, but all amiable.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank my cosponsor enough. She has also been tenacious in this, dealing with her side of the aisle when there were complications, smoothing those things over, plotting with me to get this done,

which we had to do from time to time. It has been a great pleasure to work with the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) on this as well.

I would like to thank all the staff who worked on this legislation. It does seem like a relatively simple bill, but it is a little more complicated than one might think; and there was a lot of staff involvement. Obviously, Emily Pfeiffer on my staff I thank particularly, and Joe Pinder is truly an expert on coinage. I think he dreams about these coins and constantly he would come up with things I had not thought of, usually which we had to overcome in some way or another. But his institutional knowledge of coinage in the United States, which may not be exceeded in this country, is of extraordinary value to all of us as we deal with legislation such as that.

So we are pleased to be here. We think this is obviously very good legislation for a whole variety of reasons, every bit, hopefully, as good as the quarter legislation turned out to be.

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 902, the "Presidential $1 Coin Act of 2005," that the gentleman from Delaware, Mr. CASTLE, has written.

The dollar coin has the potential to save consumers and business billions of dollars if it is available for the niche population that has need of it. However, for number of reasons the so-called "golden" dollar coin never has achieved the success it should have when it was introduced in 2000. I think the Castle bill addresses all of those, creating a demand for the coin rather than trying to force it into circulation. I like the educational opportunities the coin presents, and I particularly like that the bill would put the Statue of Liberty on the reverse of the coin. Mr. CASTLE isn't going to say this, but I will: In 1997, when Congress approved the original Golden Dollar program, the legislation left the House with more than 400 votes to put the Statue of Liberty on the coin. Somehow, before it got to the President, that important symbol disappeared. Especially after 9/11, I think all of us believe that having Lady Liberty on our currency will be terrific.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 902, introduced by Mr. CASTLE for himself and Mrs. MALONEY, seeks to improve demand for and thus circulation of the current one-dollar coin, with the intent of saving money for business and thus restraining price increases for consumers.

The legislation directs the Secretary of the Treasury to redesign the new "golden" one-dollar coin, beginning in 2007, issuing four different designs a year. Each design would depict the image and pertinent information about a President of the United States, in order of service, on the front. The reverse of the coin would depict an image of the Statue of Liberty.

Additionally, the legislation directs the Treasury Secretary to begin issuing, concurrently with the Presidential dollars, pure-gold "bullion" coins honoring and depicting the First Spouses. The bill also allows striking of an inexpensive bronze copy of the Spouse coin so that schoolchildren could collect affordable President-and-First Spouse sets, and proposes a number of methods to increase the circulation of the dollar coin.

Essentially similar legislation passed both subcommittee and full committee last year. Changes to this version include moving the starting date back one year, to 2007, and explicit guarantees that the so-called "Sacagawea" design currently being minted and issued, will continue to be minted and issued during the life of the Presidential Dollar program, as well as becoming the sole design after the end of that program.

Finally the legislation incorporates as a separate title the text of H.R. 767, introduced by Mr. LAHOOD for himself and Mr. JACKSON, which calls for a temporary redesign of the reverse of the one-cent coin in 2009 honoring the bicentennial of the birth of President Abraham Lincoln.

With that, I urge unanimous support for H.R. 902.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 902, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CASTLE. 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.

EXPANDED ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES ACT OF 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 749) to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to provide expanded access for persons in the field of membership of a Federal credit union to money order, check cashing, and money transfer services, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 749

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 ''Expanded Access to Financial Services Act of 2005''.

SEC. 2. CHECK CASHING AND MONEY TRANSFER SERVICES OFFERED WITHIN THE FIELD OF MEMBERSHIP.

Paragraph (12) of section 107 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 U.S.C. 1757(12)) is amended to read as follows:

''(12) in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Board—

''(A) to sell, to persons in the field of membership, negotiable checks (including travelers checks), money orders, and other similar money transfer instruments (including international and domestic electronic fund transfers); and

''(B) to cash checks and money orders and receive international and domestic electronic fund transfers for persons in the field of membership for a fee;''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 749, as amended.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 749, the Expanded Access to Financial Services Act of 2005, introduced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) and favorably reported to the House by the Committee on Financial Services.

This bill makes a simple change to the Federal Credit Union Act to allow Federal credit unions to offer check cashing and money transfer services to anyone within their field of membership. H.R. 749 will serve the dual purpose of lowering the cost to consumers of both check cashing and wire transfer products, while providing credit unions the opportunity to establish relationships with individuals who are currently unbanked.

Money transfers by individuals living and working in the U.S. to Latin America are currently estimated at $10 billion annually, and should more than double by 2010.

□ 1600

As the remittance market continues to grow, there becomes a significant danger in depriving customers of low-cost remittance products, thereby driving them to underground service providers that evade regulatory oversight. H.R. 749 will allow credit unions to offer remittance products to individuals who qualify for membership while promoting greater transparency within the remittance market. This improved transparency will enhance the ability for regulators and law enforcement agencies to track wire transfers used for illegal activity. Increasing the ease with which regulators and law enforcement agencies can follow the money trail is consistent with the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission on Terrorist Financing.

Allowing Federal credit unions to offer products and services to all consumers within their field of membership would provide further benefits to our economy by allowing credit unions to establish relationships with individuals who are currently ''unbanked.'' Many users of remittance services are recent immigrants and should be empowered with the knowledge and resources necessary to open personal accounts at mainstream financial institutions. Studies indicate that as many as 10 million American households do not have a bank account. Establishing and successfully managing a personal

account with an insured depository institution can lead to greater economic self-sufficiency and long-term financial security. Particularly for low- and moderate-income Americans, opening a checking or savings account can be an important first step in establishing a credit history, which can unlock doors to other financial opportunities.

I believe that this bill is a positive step toward ensuring that millions of unbanked Americans have access to secure, low-cost remittance products, while drawing these same customers into the regulated financial mainstream. I therefore encourage all of my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 749.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) summarized well the reasons for voting for this bill. If I had more forbearance, I would simply sit down, but I have a really nicely written speech here and will use a few minutes, hopefully abbreviating it, since so many of its points have already been covered.

Mr. Speaker, I will put into the RECORD at this point a letter in support of this bill from the National Association of Federal Credit Unions.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF FEDERAL CREDIT UNIONS,
Arlington, VA, April 26, 2005.

Hon. MIKE OXLEY,
Chairman, House Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. BARNEY FRANK,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Financial Services, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OXLEY AND RANKING MEMBER FRANK: On behalf of the National Association of Federal Credit Unions (NAFCU), the only national trade association that exclusively represents the interests of our nation's federal credit unions, I want to reiterate our support for the Expanded Access to Financial Services Act of 2005 (H.R. 749) and urge the House to bring up and pass this key legislation.

NAFCU fully supports the merits of this bill, since abuses are rampant in communities where immigrants rely on money transfer companies to send remittances to family members and others in their country of origin. Unfortunately, money transfer companies oftentimes charge exorbitant fees on those sending remittances, while imposing poor exchange rates. For example, a $1000 money transfer to Mexico via IRnet would cost $10, while the same transaction via Western Union would cost between $30 and $50 depending on the Western Union location. Also, the credit union providing the transfer may be successful in converting an unbanked potential member into a member. In reality, and in far too many cases, the costs associated with sending such remittances is essentially nothing more than another form of predatory lending. Many people do not know that credit unions can provide a lower cost and better alternative to these predatory practices. As such, NAFCU is pleased that a number of our member credit unions currently offer remittance services to their members.

Last year, in testimony before the House Financial Services Subcommittee on Financial Services and Consumer Credit during a hearing on the issue of regulatory relief for credit unions on July 20, 2004, NAFCU Board Secretary and Xerox FCU President & CEO Bill Cheney testified:

". . . NAFCU supports efforts to allow federal credit unions to offer check-cashing and money-transfer services to anyone within the credit union's field of membership. We believe this new authority, which would be discretionary and not mandatory, will allow credit unions to help combat abuses by nontraditional financial institutions that prey on our nation's immigrants and others who live and work in underserved communities."

That statement remains true today. The credit union industry continues to work on the front line to combat financial illiteracy and to teach consumers about sound financial practices. NAFCU believes that H.R. 749 is a good step forward in creating an alternative to those who have no choices in traditional financial services.

Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to share our support for H.R. 749. We hope that the House is able to bring up and take action on this legislation in a timely manner. If you or your staff have any questions regarding remittances abuses and how credit unions can be used to help address these problems, please do not hesitate to call on me or NAFCU's Director of Legislative Affairs, Brad Thaler.

Sincerely,

FRED R. BECKER, Jr.,
President and CEO.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 749 would allow credit unions to provide lifeline services; that is to say international remittances, wire transfers, and check-cashing services to nonmembers who are within the credit union's field of membership. Now, a credit union is restricted and serves a restricted number of people. Some credit unions are based on employment, and so you may have a credit union that serves the textile workers of Los Angeles. You might have another credit union geographically based that serves the northeast San Fernando Valley. This bill only allows a credit union to serve those who are within its field of membership, who are eligible to become members of a credit union. And it makes good sense to allow those who fit within the field of membership, but are not yet members of the credit union, to get these lifeline services. These lifeline services are often priced very high, whether it be check-cashing on the one hand, or international remittances on the other. And to instead provide additional competition so that credit unions can bring the price of these services down would be very helpful to those at the very bottom of our economic ladder.

As the gentleman from Delaware points out, it also brings people who do not have a relationship with a financial institution into a financial institution. It gives them a chance to move from nonmembers who are making use of the check cashing and remittance services, to members who have a checking account, and then gradually a savings account, a credit history, and a real piece of the American financial pie, if you will; a chance to participate with all of the services that the financial institutions of this country provide.

Now, consumers who are sending remittances now, sometimes they are paying as much as 15 percent of the amount that they plan to send. So if you are sending $300 back to your parents in Mexico, you may spend $45, and this bill will provide additional competition in the international remittance area, where many credit unions providing services to those who are already members often provide these services for only $14 or less per transaction. By bringing people into credit unions, credit unions can do what they do best, and that is serve those who are within their field of membership and begin the process of providing financial education, combating predatory lending, and bringing people into the financial system.

Today, more than 200 credit unions already provide to their members wire transfer services to almost 650 points of service in 40 countries. So the credit unions are well positioned to provide these wire transfer and international remittance services.

In 2003, the Credit Union National Association adopted a group of principles designed to guide their members when providing these international remittance services. They basically say that credit unions should disclose the cost of the transaction in their advertising and brochures and in dealings with the customer, that the credit unions will provide current exchange rate information before conducting the transaction; that they will tell the customer the exact amount of foreign currency to be received by the recipient; and they will tell the sender when the funds will be available to the recipient. These kinds of high principles are important for those in the international remittance business, and to have credit unions more involved in that business and subject to those principles is an important step forward.

As the gentleman from Delaware pointed out, the size of the international remittance business is quite large. In fact, it is estimated at least at $10 billion annually. It is expected to double by the end of this decade, and there are some estimates that place it well above $10 billion annually now.

I should also mention that nearly half of the Latinos in this country do not have an account with a mainstream financial institution, and that is why it is so important in dealing with that immigrant community, as well as other immigrant communities from elsewhere in the world, that we provide this opportunity for credit unions to provide international remittance services.

I should also take a moment to recognize the work of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) who has been the leader in dealing with all of the various aspects of the remittance, international remittance issues, and to recognize my friend, the gentleman from the Inland Empire (Mr. BACA) who provided a clarifying and perfecting amendment to this legislation. I believe that this legislation will help credit unions provide services to those

who need them, will drive down the price of those services, and will introduce people to our financial institutions. I urge an aye vote.

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

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Mr. GERLACH).

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) for taking up this bill so quickly, and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for his work on behalf of this important legislation. I would also like to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KANJORSKI), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE), and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) for their efforts as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 749, the Expanded Access to Financial Services Act. This bipartisan legislation will amend the Federal Credit Union Act to allow credit unions to offer money order, check cashing, and wire transfer services to anyone who is eligible to be a credit union member, whether or not they have credit union membership. The bill is identical to section 307 of H.R. 1375, the Financial Services Regulatory Relief Act, which passed the House by a vote of 392 to 25 on March 18, 2004.

H.R. 748 reaches out to individuals who, for whatever reason, do not have established bank accounts. These unbanked Americans, estimated to be up to 10 million households, are frequently charged high fees for a variety of financial services. By bringing competition to the marketplace, we can provide our constituents access to lower-fee alternatives.

Many of those who would utilize these services are hardworking immigrants trying to wire money home to help provide for their families. According to the Pew Hispanic Center and Multilateral Investment Fund, $10 million is sent back to Latin America each year, a figure that can more than double in the next 5 years.

It is my hope that the underserved persons who are reached by this bill will be able to use these services to establish a credit history that can then allow them to take advantage of other financial services. An initial positive experience with a depository institution may encourage the ''unbanked'' to explore other financial products.

Further, bringing immigrant workers into financial institutions is important for national security. Credit unions are required to follow the recordkeeping and reporting requirements of the Bank Secrecy Act. They must also determine that customers are in the field of membership, a process that would involve personal documentation review. Having international money transfers go through regulated financial institutions makes it easier for law enforcement officials to learn of and follow suspicious activity.

This legislation has the support of the National Credit Union Administration, the Credit Union National Association, and National Association of Federal Credit Unions.

H.R. 749 is a good, bipartisan bill. It reaches out to communities that have historically been left out of the financial services arena and encourages hardworking Americans to develop relationships with financial institutions. I hope the Members will choose today to give their constituents access to affordable financial services.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 749, the Expanded Financial Services Act of 2005.

This legislation will allow credit unions to offer services to individuals who are in their field of membership, not just those who are members.

This bill will open up the marketplace, and will provide lower-cost services to underserved individuals. The result will be that thousands of unbanked households will be able to enter the economic mainstream.

H.R. 749 includes a provision that I introduced in the Financial Services Committee that will allow these individuals to use credit unions to send international and domestic electronic fund transfers.

This provision will help underserved individuals to send and receive funds to and from their families.

Currently there are about 10 million households in the United States that do not have access to banking. This bill will help those individuals by giving them lower-cost financial alternatives to send funds to their families.

H.R. 749 will promote competition in the money transfer industry, resulting in lower fees to consumers.

By allowing credit unions to compete, we will bring huge savings to individuals transferring money and provide more money for those who need it most. The money people save by using credit unions can be reinvested in our economy, which helps all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on H.R. 749, so that thousands of underserved Americans can join the financial mainstream and access the American dream.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 749, the Expanded Access to Financial Services Act of 2005. I do so as the proud representative of Hawai'i's Second District, in which our nation's credit unions have a long and rich history, and as one of my Hawai'i's 742,000 credit union members.

H.R. 749 will allow credit unions to provide expanded services to both members and nonmembers otherwise eligible for membership. These expanded services include the issuance of travelers' checks and money orders, and electronic funds transfers.

Most specifically, this bill, if signed into law, will in part enable many more of our citizens to transfer money overseas to family members and others with greater ease, thereby assisting our personal and financial interests. For it is a fact that our country is facing its highest level of immigration since the Depression era, with over 28.4 million foreign-born individuals residing in the United States.

My Hawai'i is no exception. According to the most recent Census Bureau's American Community Survey, Hawai'i, with 17.9 percent, has the fourth-largest percentage of foreign-born residents in the United States.

An overwhelming majority of Hawai'i's foreign-born population is from Asia. According to the Susannah Wesley Community Center, a private, nonprofit agency contracted by the State of Hawai'i to provide immigrant services, Hawai'i's largest immigrant population—fifty percent of all incoming immigrants—hails from the Philippines. It is crucial to these populations and others that our financial institutions provide quick, efficient, and economical means by which monies may be transferred to their countries of origin and elsewhere.

Unfortunately, our nation's financial infrastructure has been slow to offer such services, especially in the less urbanized and rural parts of our country such as my district where our credit unions have long filled an important community-based financial services function. As a result, there is a growing population of ''unbanked'' individuals, particularly immigrants, and a costly and inefficient money transfer process.

The World Council of Credit Unions, along with the Credit Union National Association, offer credit unions a remittance product called the International Remittance Network (IRnet). IRnet is an electronic funds transfer service providing credit union members a safe and inexpensive way to send money overseas and domestically, and provides service to over 40 countries in Latin America, Asia, Africa and Europe, including the Philippines, Mexico, and Australia.

IRnet significantly decreases the costs for individuals to transfer funds overseas. Over the past four years, the advent of IRnet and enhanced competition among our financial institutions offering money transfer services has driven down remittance costs for consumers. The average cost today of sending $300 to Mexico is between $13 and $14, or 4–5 percent of the amount sent, compared to the average cost four years ago, which was between $30 and $32, or 10–11 percent.

This legislation will expand the range and number of people eligible for the use of IRnet and thereby lower the costs paid by the consumer for these services through increased competition within the marketplace. In the process, it will also encourage a larger number of our newly-arrived citizens and residents to utilize our credit unions and other financial services.

H.R. 749 will not harm or otherwise risk our country's financial or monetary security, as IRnet utilizes real-time monitoring of transactions against the Specially Designated Names, SDN, list from the Office of Foreign Asset Control. What this bill will do again is to help more people in our communities with more and better ways to provide for their personal and economic needs and obligations overseas while preserving basic homeland security protections.

Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. GERLACH, for introducing this bill. I look forward to working with him and our nation's invaluable credit unions to see this measure through into law.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 749, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CRACKDOWN IN CUBA

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 81) expressing the sense of Congress regarding the two-year anniversary of the human rights crackdown in Cuba.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 81

Whereas in March 2003, Cuban dictator Fidel Castro arrested more than 75 journalists, labor union organizers, civic leaders, librarians, and human rights activists as political prisoners;

Whereas the Cuban regime, after summary trials which were denounced by the international community, sentenced these innocent men and women to a total of more than 1,000 years in prison for trying to exercise their civil and political rights, many of whom are anticipated to die in prison before their sentence is completed;

Whereas the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms a commitment to fundamental human rights and to the dignity and worth of all people;

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which establishes global human rights standards, asserts that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention;

Whereas these arrests and convictions were an atrocious attempt by the Cuban regime to crush the citizens' movements for a free and democratic Cuba;

Whereas Fidel Castro has tentatively released a limited number of prisoners from jail but these political activists are subject to arrest and imprisonment at any time pursuant to ''extra penal licenses'';

Whereas in 2004, the Cuban regime continued its suppression of democracy and repression of human rights activists, imprisoning a significant number of political dissidents during the year on such charges as disrespect for authority, public disorder, disobedience, and resisting arrest;

Whereas in April 2004, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution deploring the sentencing of ''political dissidents and journalists'' in 2003 and calling for a visit to Cuba by a Personal Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights which was later denied by the Cuban regime;

Whereas Fidel Castro continues to hold hundreds of political prisoners in his jail cells;

Whereas Amnesty International has recognized all journalists and activists who were arrested in the crackdown in March 2003 as prisoners of conscience;

Whereas the Cuban regime engages in torture and other cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment and punishment against political prisoners to force them into submission, including intense beatings, extended periods of solitary confinement, and denial of nutritional and medical attention, according to the Department of State's Country Report on Human Rights 2004;

Whereas religious freedom in Cuba is severely circumscribed, and clergy and lay people suffer sustained persecution by the Cuban State Security apparatus;

Whereas the Cuban regime denies the people of Cuba equal protection under the law, disallows them recourse for remedying violations of human rights and civil liberties, and instead enforces a judicial system which infringes upon fundamental rights; and

Whereas the United States Congress has stood, consistently, on the side of the Cuban people and supported their right to be free: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) condemns in the strongest possible terms the arrest of more than 75 journalists, labor union organizers, civic leaders, librarians, and human rights activists as political prisoners in March 2003 and the Cuban regime's continuing repressive crackdown against the brave internal opposition and the independent press;

(2) expresses its profound admiration and firm solidarity with the internal opposition and independent press of Cuba;

(3) demands that the Cuban regime immediately release all political prisoners, legalize all political parties, labor unions, and the press, and hold free and fair elections;

(4) declares the acts of the Cuban regime, including its widespread and systematic violation of human rights, to be in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(5) declares that the rule of law should replace the rule of force so that the fundamental and inalienable rights of every individual in Cuba are protected;

(6) calls for the European Union, as well as other countries and international organizations, to continue to pressure the Cuban regime to improve its human rights record; and

(7) calls for United Nations member countries to vote against the Cuban regime's membership in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the passage of a resolution at the 61st session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights that holds the Cuban regime accountable for its gross violations of human rights and civil liberties.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, with the world's attention riveted on Iraq, Fidel Castro ordered his feared state security apparatus to round up at least 75 of Cuba's best and bravest and brightest, prominent and even lesser-known dissidents. Among these are 28 independent journalists and 40 Varela project workers. With sickening speed, these men and women were paraded before kangaroo courts and given prison sentences ranging from 6 to 28 years; 61 remain in prison.

When the Committee on International Relations met on April 16, 2003 to decry this vile abrogation of justice, I stated at that time that ''Even some of the most outspoken leftists who once saw in Fidel Castro something to admire now admit that Castro's unbridled cruelty, his thirst for blood, and extreme paranoia are indefensible.'' I regret to report that Castro has not given me and, frankly, he has given no one else as well, any reason to reassess that statement or those sentiments.

What were the so-called crimes that these brave men and women committed? They were advocating democracy, writing as independent journalists, and being men and women of faith.

Their real offense was to dare to question the authority of a single man: Fidel Castro. The Cuban Revolution is really about Castro's vanity and pursuit of personal power. From the beginning, Castro has shot and jailed anyone, even close friends, who have dared to get in the way of his personal ambitions.

Dictatorships, reflecting the whims of a despot, always subject their people to deprivations and absurdities. The Castro regime recently let a handful of its political prisoners out on parole, citing health reasons. The regime's callousness toward ailing political prisoners is well documented.

Now, independent Cuban journalists are reporting that Cuba's prisons have been virtually emptied of medical personnel. Why? Mr. Castro decided to send them to Venezuela and other places to advance his personal expansionist agenda.

Mr. Speaker, writing in the Spanish newspaper, El Pais, Nobel Prize winner Jose Saramago, a Portuguese Communist and close friend of Castro, commented after 3 alleged Havana ferry hijackers were killed by a firing squad in Cuba in May of 2003, ''Cuba has won no heroic victory by executing these three men, but it has lost my confidence, damaged my hopes, and robbed me of illusions.''

□ 1615

Illusions, as Castro-lover Jose Saramago has only now begun to acknowledge, often persist despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the case of Castro's Cuba.

Despite decades of credible reports of widespread egregious violations of human rights, including the pervasive use of torture and vicious beatings of political prisoners by the Cuban Government, some have clung to indefensibly foolish illusions of Castro's revolution.

Despite the fact that the Cuban Government systematically denies its people freedom of speech, press freedom, assembly and association, and severely restricts workers' rights, including the right to form independent trade unions, some have nevertheless clung to illusion.

Despite the fact that Cuba and Castro maintain an unimaginably vast network of surveillance by the thugs in his secret police and the committees for the defense of the revolution, or CDRs, neighbors spying on neighbors, some continue to embrace bogus perceptions, illusions about Castro and about Cuba.

In his book ''Against All Hope,'' the book that I have actually read twice now, a memoir of life in Castro's gulags, Armando Valladares, a courageous and amazing man who spent 22 years in Cuban prisons wrote: ''The government of Cuba and its defenders of the Cuban revolution denied that the incidents that I recount in the book ever happened.'' He says, ''Castro sympathizers who were more subtle said the incidents that he described were exaggerations. And there were others, well meaning who simply could not bring themselves to believe that such horrors, crimes and torture existed in the political prisons of Cuba.

''My response,'' Armando Valladares goes on to say, ''to those who still try to justify Castro's tyranny with the excuse that he built schools and hospitals, is this: Stalin and Hitler and Pinochet all built schools and hospitals, and like Castro, they all tortured and assassinated opponents. They built concentration and extermination camps and eradicated all liberties, committing the worst crimes against humanity.''

Armando Valladares goes on to say: ''Unbelievably while many NGOs like Amnesty International and America's Watch have denounced the human rights situation in Cuba, there has been a continuing love affair on the part of the media and many intellectuals with Fidel Castro.''

Mr. Speaker, that love affair, that illusion seemed to crash and burn with the onset of the current crackdown on dissidents. The EU for its part took action in June of 2003 by limiting high-level EU governmental visits and inviting Cuban dissidents to National Day celebrations. But, sadly, their memories are short. In January of this year, at the initiative of the Spanish Government, the EU temporarily suspended these measures for a 6-month period.

Mr. Speaker, at the 61st session of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, which was held this past month, the United States, I am very proud to say the United States offered a resolution on the human rights situation in Cuba. The resolution recalled the resolutions of the previous 15 years; and I would just say, parenthetically, I was there 15 years ago when Armando Valladares led the U.S. delegation, having been sent out of the government or out of Cuba by Castro, and got that body, which is dysfunctional in many ways, to finally focus on these ongoing and persistent violations of human rights in Cuba, and that was the first time.

I am glad to say that we just, at U.S. insistence, were able to get another statement by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights focused on the ongoing abuses by Cuba. The resolution passed by a vote of 21 to 17 with 15 abstentions, but only after a full court press by the U.S. delegation led by Rudy Boschwitz, which included personal pleas from President Bush to the presidents of Ukraine and Mexico.

I am sad to point out that China, Congo, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe all voted against the resolution, in effect putting their stamp of approval on Castro's actions.

Let me just say finally, Mr. Speaker, that this resolution we have today is a reiteration. It is a bipartisan resolution offered by my friend and colleague from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ). And I hope that every member will vote in favor of it.

Two years ago, with the world's attention riveted on Iraq, Fidel Castro ordered his feared State Security apparatus to round up at least 75 of Cuba's bravest and brightest, prominent and lesser-known dissidents. Among these are 28 independent journalists and 40 Varela project workers. With sickening speed, these men and women were paraded before kangaroo courts and given prison sentences ranging from 6 to 28 years. Sixty-one remain in jail.

When the Committee on International Relations met April 16, 2003 to decry this vile abrogation of justice, I stated at that time: "Even some of the most outspoken leftists, who once saw in Fidel Castro something to admire, now admit that Castro's unbridled cruelty, thirst for blood and extreme paranoia are indefensible."

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What were the so-called crimes of these brave men and women? Advocating democracy . . . writing as independent journalists . . . being men and women of faith.

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Dictatorships, reflecting the whims of a despot, always subject their people to deprivations and absurdities. The Castro regime recently let a handful of its political prisoners out on "parole," citing health reasons. The regime's callousness towards ailing political prisoners is well documented.

Now, independent Cuban journalists are reporting that Cuba's prisons have been virtually emptied of medical personnel. Why? Mr. Castro decided to send them to Venezuela and other places to advance his personal expansionist agenda.

Writing in the Spanish newspaper, El Pais, Noble prize winner Jose Saramago, a Portuguese communist and close friend of Castro commented after three alleged Havana ferry hijackers were killed by firing squad in Cuba in May 2003, "Cuba has won no heroic victory by executing these three men, but it has lost my confidence, damaged my hopes and robbed me of illusions."

Illusions, as Castro lover Jose Saramago has only now begun to acknowledge, often persist despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

Nowhere has this been more evident than in the case of Castro's Cuba.

Despite decades of credible reports of widespread egregious violations of human rights, including the pervasive use of torture and vicious beatings of political prisoners by the Cuban government, some have clung to indefensibly foolish illusions of Castro's revolution.

Despite the fact that the Cuban government systematically denies its people the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, and association, and severely restricts workers' rights, including the right to form independent trade unions, some have, nevertheless, clung to illusion.

Despite the fact that Castro maintains an unimaginably vast network of surveillance by the thugs in his secret police and Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs)—neighbors spying on neighbors—some continue to embrace bogus perceptions—illusions about Cuba.

In his book, "Against All Hope, a Memoir of Life in Castro's Gulags" Armando Valladares, a courageous and amazing man who spent 22 years in Cuban prisons wrote:

> The government of Cuba and defenders of the Cuban Revolution denied that incidents that I recount (in the book) ever happened. Castro sympathizers, who were more subtle, said the incidents I described were exaggerations. And there were others, well meaning, who simply could not bring themselves to believe that such horrors, crimes and torture existed in the political prisons of Cuba.
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> My response to those who still try to justify Castro's tyranny with the excuse that he has built schools and hospitals is this: Stalin, Hitler and Pinochet also built schools and hospitals, and like Castro, they also tortured and assassinated opponents. They built concentration and extermination camps and eradicated all liberties, committing the worst crimes against humanity.
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> Unbelievably, while many non-governmental organizations like Amnesty International and America's Watch have denounced the human rights situation in Cuba, there has been a continuing love affair on the part of the media and many intellectuals with Fidel Castro.

That love affair—that illusion—seemed to crash and burn with the onset of the current crackdown on dissidents. The EU took action in June 2003 by limiting high-level EU governmental visits and inviting Cuban dissidents to national day celebrations. But their memories are short. In January of this year, at the initiative of the Spanish government, the EU temporarily suspended these measures for a six-month period.

At the 61st session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva this past month, the United States offered a resolution on the human rights situation in Cuba. The resolution recalled the resolutions of the previous 15 years which the Commission had passed on Cuba, and asked that the mandate of the Personal Representative of the High Commissioner be continued. The resolution passed by a vote of 21–17, with 15 abstentions, but only after a fullcourt lobbying press by the U.S. delegation which included personal pleas from President Bush to the Presidents of Ukraine and Mexico. China, Congo, Cuba, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe all voted against the resolution, in effect putting their stamp of approval on Castro's actions.

Let me mention a few of the ones who were summarily sentenced and remain in prison. Omar Rodriguez Saludes, an independent journalist known to ride his bicycle to news conferences: 27 years. Hector Palacios, one of the key figures promoting the Varela Project: 25 years. Oscar Espinosa Chepe, who wrote critical articles about the Cuban economy for the Internet: 25 years. The President of the Independent United Confederation of Cuban Workers (CUTC), Pedro Pablo Alvarez, 25 years. Journalist Raul Rivero and Ricardo Gonzalez Afonso, an editor at ''De Cuba'' magazine, each got 20 years. The list goes on and on.

For its part, the Bush Administration has made its deep and abiding concern for the political prisoners and the protection of elemental human rights in Cuba abundantly clear. At the time of the crackdown, former Secretary of State Colin Powell declared:

> In recent days the Cuban government has undertaken the most significant act of political repression in decades. We call on Castro to end this despicable repression and free these prisoners of conscience. The United States and the international community will be unrelenting in our insistence that Cubans who seek peaceful change be permitted to do so.

In like manner, the Congress has consistently demanded the immediate release of all the prisoners and support of the right of the Cuban people to exercise fundamental political and civil liberties. H. Res. 179, a resolution offered by Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN in April 2003, passed by a vote of 414–0, 11 present. In April of 2001, I sponsored a resolution, H. Res. 91, calling on the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva to condemn Cuba's human rights abuse and appoint a Special Rapporteur for Cuba. While it passed, there were a disturbing number of negative votes. That vote was 347–44 with 22 voting present.

We have another opportunity today to move forward a resolution offered by my Colleague, Mr. MENENDEZ, to show that these prisoners are not forgotten. Fidel Castro, his brother Raul, and numerous leaders of Cuba's dictatorship, are directly responsible for crimes against humanity past—and present. Some day these oppressors will be held to account and the people of Cuba will live in freedom.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. Let me first thank my colleague, the distinguished chairman of the International Relations Committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for facilitating our body's consideration of the resolution so expeditiously. And let me thank my two friends on the other side, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), for their indefatigable fight for all human rights issues globally. I also want to thank my friend, the ranking Democratic member of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), for his ongoing battle for human rights in Cuba.

Mr. Speaker, it is inexcusable that 2 years after 75 Cuban lovers of freedom were tried in kangaroo courts in Havana, sentenced to prison terms ranging from 6 to 28 years for a total prison term of a thousand years and imprisoned in rat-infested dank cells, Castro's totalitarian machine is still trying to crack the backs of that Caribbean island's internal opposition by continuing to lock up some of its most distinguished civic and human rights leaders.

These political prisoners, Mr. Speaker, are suffering unspeakable horrors at the hands of Cuban police agents simply because they dare to articulate their disagreement with Castro's Communist government; because they dared to share their personal book collections with their friends and neighbors; because they dared to advocate for labor unions; and because they refused to compromise their journalistic integrity.

These soldiers of freedom, Mr. Speaker, who stand shoulder to shoulder in spirit with the likes of Poland's Lech Walesa and the Czech Republic's Vaclav Havel, were thrown behind bars because they practiced their professions or attempted to exert their political rights and civil liberties without the blessings of Castro's oppressive regime.

Many of those arrested were supporters of the so-called Varela Project, a grassroots, nonviolent citizens' movement in Cuba that seeks fundamental political change on the island by petitioning the Cuban Government for a referendum on reform.

Mr. Speaker, it is painfully clear that Castro still does not grasp what has become obvious to many leaders of isolated countries, that the ideological contest between democratic liberty and totalitarian suppression was won over a decade ago. There is no question today, as there was during World War II or throughout the long years of the Cold War, that systems and individuals who seek to repress and terrorize their people ultimately will not prevail.

It is only a matter of time before the Communist government of Cuba will realize that the choice before it is not whether the cronies of Castro will be able to maintain power, for the answer to that question is a clear and resounding no; but rather whether they want to participate constructively in a process that will surely transition Cuba to a future of freedom, democracy, and economic opportunity for all.

Mr. Speaker, recently, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere convened a remarkable hearing at which members of the internal opposition spoke via telephone from Havana, despite placing themselves at risk of state persecution. These courageous political dissidents forcefully argued that we in Congress should call upon the international community to denounce Cuba's human rights record at every opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, here in this House we may disagree on how best to bring about change in Cuba. But we stand together in steadfast solidarity with those who endure the depths of human depravity solely because they strive each day to loosen the shackles of communist repression for themselves and their fellow countrymen and women.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 81, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am greatly humbled to follow such internationally recognized human rights leaders as the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), my good friend, and my equally wonderful friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH). I am honored to be in their presence.

And we stand here today, Mr. Speaker, 2 years after a cruel, despotic, and vicious act by one of the most cowardly and evil men in the world, Fidel Castro, the unlawful arrest of over 70 peaceful dissidents on the island of Cuba.

The arrest of these innocent men and women are promulgated by a culture of fear, Mr. Speaker, one that has banned libraries, one that has banned books, one that maintains a system of remote and unmonitored gulags for prisoners of conscience, one that forbids independent labor unions, one that causes the systematic mistreatment of religious believers, one that mandates the summary execution of independent journalists and conscientious objectors.

This important resolution before us demands that the Cuban regime release all political prisoners, legalize all political parties, labor unions and the press, and hold free elections. In other words, to be afforded their basic freedoms.

Further, it calls for the European Union, as well as other countries and international organizations, to pressure the Cuban regime to improve its deplorable human rights record.

As we convene in this great Hall of democracy, many in Cuba continue to be dragged down stairs, strapped to chairs and beaten for wanting one thing and one thing only, freedom, and with that, the freedom to express their thoughts and their ability to exercise their basic universally held human rights.

In passing this legislation, Mr. Speaker, we are once again in the Congress reaffirming our commitment to the brave people of the island of Cuba, especially those 75 men and women who were cruelly arrested for advocating peacefully in favor of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights.

I commend my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), as well as the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH),

for this bill, and wholeheartedly support this legislation. And I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of it today.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 81, a resolution which condemns the crackdown on political dissidents that was orchestrated by the regime of Fidel Castro two years ago. Through this remarkable violation of human rights, the Cuban government arrested more than 75 journalists, labor union organizers, civic leaders, librarians, and human rights activists, and took them as political prisoners. On this occasion, it is important that we keep in mind the struggle in which our brothers and sisters in Cuba continued to be engaged—that is, the struggle for freedom and true democracy.

One of the many dissenters arrested in March 2003 was Mr. Jose Daniel Ferrer Garcia, a pro-democracy activist in Cuba who has been jailed for his outspoken leadership in the Cuban democracy movement. Mr. Garcia is the regional coordinator for the Christian Liberation Movement in Santiago Province. Through this leadership position, he has moblilzed many Cuban youth for democratic change, and has focused on accomplishing the movement's chief objective: to unite citizens that are willing to defend and promote human rights and achieve changes in the Cuban society through peaceful means. Because of the efforts of determined individuals such as Mr. Garcia, the struggle for democracy in Cuba continues, and we should keep this in mind when considering any potential changes in United States policy towards Castro's regime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 81, and continue to voice their solidarity with Mr. Garcia and all other pro-democracy activists in Cuba as they continue their push for true freedom.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker. A todos mis hermanos y hermanas quienes sufren en las cárceles de Castro bajo su régimen, a sus familias y amistades aquí en los Estados Unidos y en Cuba, les digo que el pueblo americano está con ustedes. Y, aquí en el Congreso de los Estados Unidos, vamos a defender su libertad y ganar la lucha contra la brutalidad y la opresión.

Por eso, junto con mis otras colegas en el Congreso, escribí esta resolución que condena la ola represiva contra los disidentes que hizo la régimen Castro hace dos años y que declara que la gente cubana debe tener los derechos humanos y la libertad—la libertad de expresión y de asociación—y el derecho de tener elecciónes libres.

To all my friends here today who don't speak Spanish, don't worry, I won't spend the rest of my time speaking in Spanish. But I did want to take a moment to speak directly to the Cuban people to let them know that we stand with them in their fight for freedom and human rights.

We are debating this resolution today under the shadow of the 2nd anniversary of the crackdown on dissidents in Cuba. We often think of an anniversary as a moment to celebrate—but clearly we have nothing to celebrate today. Instead, we use this anniversary to mark a tragedy in the lives of the Cuban people and to the lives of all those who support democracy and human rights in the hemisphere.

The whole world was horrified as more than 75 journalists, human rights activists, and opposition political figures were arrested, given summary trials, and then sentenced to prison terms of up to 28 years. Many of the prisoners, along with other prisoners of conscience, spent over a year in solitary confinement. Some have been deprived of adequate medical treatment and reports from Cuba detail beatings and harassment.

I am not fooled by the recent release of a number of dissidents, by this attempt to trick the international community. I am not fooled because I know that when they released those dissidents, who should never have been in jail in the first place, they also arrested new dissidents. I am not fooled because I know that they only released these dissidents on "parole," meaning that they could be arrested again at any time.

Hundreds of political prisoners remain in Castro's jails today. Clearly, the Castro regime has no respect for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states in Article 4 that, "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment." And the world has recognized these injustices. The State Department calls this wave, "the most despicable act of political repression in the Americas in a decade."

Castro's human rights record has been condemned by Amnesty International, Freedom House, and other human rights groups.

In a statement, Amnesty International said that these "prisoners of conscience" should be immediately released and called on the Cuban regime to, "comply with the principles laid out in international rights standards for the treatment of prisoners."

Freedom House included Cuba in its report entitled, "The Worst of the Worst, The World's Most Repressive Societies, 2004." And the House of Representatives has condemned Castro's human rights record as well, in multiple resolutions. This year, on the two-year anniversary, we are here to pass a resolution that condemns Castro's brutal crackdown and demands that the Cuban regime immediately release all political prisoners, legalize all political parties, labor unions, and the press, and hold free and fair elections.

Today is a time for all of us to come together, from both sides of the aisle, to stand together for a universal cause: human rights.

Today, in voting for this resolution, we will celebrate the strength and perseverance of the Cuban people.

Today, we will vote for the universal values which we all share.

So I call on all of the Members of the House of Representatives to join me in the fight for human rights and democracy for the Cuban people.

Now is the time for us to stand together against brutality, torture and dictatorship.

Now is the time for us to stand together for freedom, for the right to free speech and free association, and for human rights in general.

Now is the time for us to stand together as we call on the Cuban regime to immediately release these prisoners of conscience, who were jailed for standing up for democracy and human rights against a brutal dictatorship.

To my brothers and sisters who suffer in Castro's jails, to their families and friends both here in the United States and Cuba, and to the Cuban people, I say that Castro will not succeed in his vain attempt to suppress the spirit of the Cuban people. I look forward to the day, which is coming soon, when we will all celebrate a free and democratic Cuba. It is the spirit of the Cuban people and their courage that will ultimately be Castro's downfall.

So, I ask each of you to join me in voting yes for this resolution.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we have no further requests for time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 81.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 81.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1630

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 1268, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF, 2005

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 1268) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, to establish and rapidly implement regulations for State driver's license and identification document security standards, to prevent terrorists from abusing the asylum laws of the United States, to unify terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and removal, to ensure expeditious construction of the San Diego border fence, and for other purposes, with Senate amendments thereto, disagree to the Senate amendments, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Obey moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendments, to the bill, H.R. 1268, be instructed to insist on the highest levels of funding within the scope of conference for Customs and Border Protection, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement and to agree to the Senate provision regarding including requests for future funding for military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq in the annual budget of the President.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

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

Mr. Speaker, this motion is very simple. It does two things. First of all, it instructs the conferees representing the House to accept the Senate increases in the Byrd and other amendments that would strengthen our customs and border protection; it would strengthen our immigration and customs enforcement and fund the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

Secondly, it instructs the conferees to agree with the Senate amendment, again, the Byrd amendment, which would require that all future administration requests for funding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan be presented within the context of the regular budget rather than being funded as they have been so far through the supplemental process.

Let me address briefly both issues. With respect to the border protection issue, let me point out that many years ago the Rudman-Hart Commission had effectively warned this Congress that our borders were a sieve.

In the immediate days after this House was hit with the anthrax scare, shortly after 9/11, I went down to the White House with the then-chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), and we proposed to the President a bipartisan list of supplemental additions to antiterrorist activities that we believe should be funded in order to strengthen homeland security. Included in those recommendations were added dollars for our ports, added dollars for our border protection. When we laid out what we were interested in doing, the President simply ended the conversation by saying to us, ''I am sorry but my good friend here, Mitch Daniels,'' who was then the Director of OMB, he said, ''my good friend Mitch Daniels here tells me that the administration has requested more than enough money for Homeland Security. And so I want you to know if you include one dollar more than we have asked for in our budget submission, I will veto the bill.''

That is essentially what he said. Ever since that day, we have been strained in the Congress to overcome the White House's reluctance to provide adequate resources to secure our borders.

I would point out that the PATRIOT Act itself called for a tripling of inspectors and agents on the northern border alone, and yet no Bush administration budget has ever proposed to meet that goal. Only because of congressional insistence have we finally been able to meet that goal, and I would say it has been a long time in coming and it was long overdue.

On March 30 the administration announced that they were putting 500 agents in Arizona, but those agents were not new agents; 135 of them were simply transferred from other sources and the rest of them were simply new trainees to take the place of agents who were retiring or leaving the service. That is why we believe that the added funding provided in the Byrd and other amendments in the Senate to add funds for securing our borders, that is why we believe that money is necessary.

□ 1645

With respect to the second provision, the reason this second provision is necessary is to end the administration practice of hiding the true cost of the war in Iraq. We have spent, to this point, about $280 billion on that war. CBO estimates that the 10-year cost of our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan will wind up being about $460 billion, and yet all of that money has been spent through a supplemental process, rather than the process of having the President submit in his regular budget their estimated cost for those activities for the year.

When you cut through all of the bull gravy, there is only one reason why the White House has done that, because they are trying to obscure the full cost of those military operations.

Now, I would simply remind this House that President Roosevelt included the cost of funding World War II in his 1943 budget request. President Johnson included the cost of paying for the war in Vietnam in his 1966 budget request. President Clinton, at the insistence of this Congress, provided in the regular budget for the costs for financing our Bosnia operations and the enforcement of the no-fly zone edict in the 1997 budget.

People think that the President this year has submitted a budget which contains a deficit of $390 billion. In fact, that budget deficit does not include $1 of the more than $80 billion that this House voted to add to pay for the war in Iraq just a couple of months ago.

So I would say this provision simply is in pursuit of truth in budgeting, and I see no public policy reason why either of these provisions should be resisted. I ask for a ''yes'' vote when the vote occurs.

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

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I do not intend to use a lot of my time, but I think our public knows that both sides of the aisle, Democratic and Republican sides of the aisle, are struggling with the question of how we provide adequate funding to make certain, absolutely certain, that we are protecting our borders.

Just following 2001, the past administration had difficulty trying to figure out exactly what those costs should be. We should be willing to do whatever is necessary within the limits of what is sensible, to secure those borders.

It is my intention to support that position, and I do not intend to resist this motion to instruct.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

Mr. Speaker, could I inquire, after her 5 minutes, how much time do I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) will have 18 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) will have 29 minutes remaining.

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished ranking member for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the gentleman from Wisconsin's (Mr. OBEY) motion to instruct conferees on the emergency supplemental.

This motion declares that all future funding requests for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan should be included in the President's budget, not in emergency supplemental spending bills.

This provision enjoyed wide bipartisan support and was included in the Senate bill. The House needs now to follow this track to fiscal responsibility.

While I support using emergency funds to pay for real emergencies, continued reliance on emergency spending for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan is fiscally irresponsible. Congress should stop bailing out the Pentagon for its inability to pay for the costs in Iraq.

On top of over $400 billion in defense appropriations every year, Congress has provided $268.7 billion in emergency supplemental funding for the war in Iraq and the war on terror. The new emergency supplemental will bring total war-related supplemental spending to $350 billion.

The gentleman from Wisconsin's (Mr. OBEY) motion would not prevent this emergency supplemental from going through, but it would make sure that the administration and the Pentagon, like millions of Americans, budget according to their means. We can afford

to fight and win the war on terror, but the public should not be misled into believing that these costs are an emergency or unexpected or that there is not an imperative for the Pentagon to look at its existing budget and deal with the war inside that budget.

For example, we know that the war in Afghanistan and Iraq operations cost roughly $6 billion a month. Those costs have been somewhat fixed for well over a year. It is perfectly capable and necessary for the Pentagon to look inside its own operations, find savings and find a way to put this in the budget.

These costs can be planned for and considered by Congress in regular order, instead of saddling our children with billions of dollars of debt and cutting vital domestic programs.

Last February, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), my friend and colleague and chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, sent a strong letter to the Committee on the Budget for what he called funding certain items in the supplemental ''inappropriate.'' The gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) also agreed with many of us that some supplemental costs should be included in the annual budget process for consideration and action by the Congress.

Not budgeting for the war in the regular Pentagon budget is an abrogation of our responsibilities as stewards of the taxpayers' trust.

I urge support of the Obey motion.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO), the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

I rise in support of the Obey motion to instruct. ICE simply needs more money, and I think we all understand that. For some reason, their budget has been in shambles ever since the Department was created. Their bookkeeping has been in shambles more so than their budget, and I am not sure if it is their fault or the fault of the central Department, but it is somebody's fault. It is all screwed up.

It is not because Congress has not provided the money they asked for. Last year, we provided slightly more than they asked for, and so they were in hiring freezes and training freezes and one problem after the other. Now they want to take money away from lots of other good programs to make up for their budget shortfall. We simply need to get ICE's funding straightened out, and this supplemental does it.

The other thing this supplemental does is add border agents. Whatever one's views are on all the controversies relating to immigration and other issues, one thing is evident, and that is, we need to strengthen our law enforcement on our borders, whether it is the northern border or the southern border.

I was out this winter and visited the southern border in California where clearly we have made significant process; but what seems to happen, we plug a hole someplace and the pressure comes other places. So we need to add border patrol people.

We were told in our committee that they should have the capacity to train about 1,200 people a year; and clearly, this bill provides less than 1,200, but even I think the President's request is an additional 200 for next year. So, clearly, they have the capacity to begin the process of training and hiring additional border patrol agents.

It is not something that happens. You do not say we want more agents and it happens tomorrow. You have to recruit them, you have to hire them, and you have to train them. The need is obvious, I think, to everyone; and this bill clearly moves us in the right direction.

So I hope we adopt the motion to instruct and adopt the policies implemented in the Senate bill on funding for ICE and for border patrol agents.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me say that I feel this discussion is a very healthy discussion in terms of the preliminary work we have to do here. The most important reason for this supplemental is because in line and waiting are the troops who are representing us so well in the Middle East.

It is critical that we get this bill on to conference and move it quickly to the President's desk. So, today, I would hope with all of our discussion, above and beyond everything else we make every effort to make certain we get this bill to the President as quickly as possible.

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

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire of the gentleman if he has any other remaining speakers.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I do not.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me simply say I think I have already chewed the cud quite enough, and I think anyone who cares to listen understands what this motion does. These motions were accepted by wide margins in the Senate. I see no reason why they cannot be accepted here; and if the gentleman is prepared to yield back, so am I.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important motion to instruct conferees on the fiscal year 2005 Supplemental Appropriations bill.

As a Member representing a district on the United States-Mexico border, and as the only Member of Congress with a background in immigration and experience defending our Nation's borders, I have firsthand knowledge of the kinds of resources we need to help keep America safe.

Since coming to Congress I have heard a lot about how we need to crack down on illegal immigration in this country, but seen very little action when it comes to providing adequate funding for the programs that we know work in dealing with the problem.

Most recently, with the passage of the Intelligence Reform bill, Congress promised to provide funding to hire thousands of new Border Patrol agents and create thousands of beds for immigration detention and removal activities. Unfortunately, however, the President's proposed FY2006 budget falls woefully short of meeting these needs.

During House consideration of the Supplemental Appropriations bill, I offered an amendment to add $772 million to hire an additional 1,000 Border Patrol agents, provide 8,000 beds for immigration and detention removal operations, and install radiation portal monitors at Ports of Entry. That amendment, which would have provided essential border security funding, was ruled out of order on procedural grounds. Unless we insist on the highest possible levels of funding for border security in this conference, Congress will once again fail to keep its commitment on this vital issue.

Meanwhile, every day foreign nationals from over 150 countries who are here in the United States illegally are being apprehended and turned back out onto our streets because we lack the space to detain them. At the same time, we hear of known terrorists who are training recruits to infiltrate our country in order to do us harm.

Mr. Speaker, the time has long since come to make good on our border security promises—or continue to risk safety of the American people. I urge my colleagues to support Mr. OBEY's motion to instruct.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Obey motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 1268, Wartime supplemental, to insist on the highest possible funding for more border patrol agents and to insist on the Senate provision calling for requests for future funding for military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq to be included in the annual budget of the President.

As a member representing a border community—and a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee—I am grateful for Mr. OBEY's leadership and his work to include these important provisions in our Wartime supplemental. As so many of our colleagues know, I have been lifting my voice to get the word around to members that our border security is profoundly lacking. Members can go to my web page for more information about the dangerous practices ongoing along the U.S. Mexico border.

Currently, the United States does not have room to hold the large number of illegal immigrants—called OTMs, Other than Mexicans—caught by border law enforcement. So we are releasing—on their own recognizance—into the population of the United States—very large numbers of OTMs. Very few released OTMs return for a mandatory deportation, meaning there is a large number of OTMs at large in the U.S., immigrants who have passed through the hands of law enforcement. Border law enforcement officers routinely call the detention centers, discover there is no more room to hold OTMs, so they are processed and released into the general population on their own recognizance.

The OTMs are given a ''Notice of appear,'' paperwork that allows them to travel freely in the United States through the time they are to return for deportation. Law enforcement officers then take the released OTMs to the local

bus station by the vanload, where they head elsewhere in the U.S. The number of "absconders"—those who never appear for deportation—is over 90 percent of those released, a number now estimated to be approaching 75,000. Already the number of OTMs captured and released is more so far this year, then for all of last year.

The Southern Border is being left utterly unprotected, and there is the real possibility that terrorists can—or already are—exploting this series of holes in our law enforcement system along the southern border. These are the things we know. There is no way of even guessing how many others are entering the country, but who are not passing through the hands of government law enforcement officers, so Mr. OBEY's instructions to our appropriators is extremely timely.

This is a clear and present danger inside the United States, and the number of released illegal immigrants not returning for deportation grows by the hundreds each week. This is willfully ignoring a complex problem that undermines our national objective: to take the war to the enemy so we do not have to fight the war on terror inside our country. It is little wonder that private citizens are taking the law into their own hands to try to stem the tide of OTMs coming into our country. But private militias—operating without the color of law—is not the answer. We must secure our borders so private citizens do not feel the need to do so.

Our budget reflects the values and priorities of the American people. Consider what the 2005 budget did not include:

The Intelligence Reform bill that became law in December, 2004, mandated 10,000 Border Patrol agents over 5 years, 20,000 annually. The President's budget funded 210 BP agents, the senate added 1,050 agents. The House must stand up and add the full 2,000.

Intelligence Reform mandated an increase of 8,000 beds in detention facilities annually for the next 5 years, still not nearly enough to hold all those coming in the U.S. . . . yet the President's budget proposal provides for only about 1,900 new detention space beds—over 6,000 beds short of the congressional mandate passed in December, 2004. We can add all the Border Patrol agents we want, but without a place to hold these OTMs, the problem remains.

Grants to reimburse local law enforcement officers that also hold illegal immigrants for the federal government were slashed, adding to the problem. I was a law enforcement officer in my previous life. If we don't have the border officers to stop the OTMs crossing the border . . . if we don't have the room to hold the ones we catch . . . if we don't put our money where our mouth is, we are sending a dangerous signal to those who may wish to do us harm. Until we send a signal that those who cross our borders illegally . . . until we send a signal that when we catch you we will hold you until you are deported . . . until we honestly face the amount of money it will take to deal with these things, OTMs will continue to flock to the U.S.

We must send that signal today. Homeland security must be about the security of our people and our property, it cannot be budget driven as it is today.

Lastly, as a fiscal conservative and member of the Armed Services committee, I know it is ultimately the responsibility of Congress—not the Administation—to properly spend money on military operations. To that end, I thank our Ranking Democrat on appropriations for including in this motion a provision requiring future funding for our military operations to be included in the President's budget.

All the money we appropriate here is the people's money and we must be good stewards of it. To rush through special bills to fund the military when committees of jurisdiction have not had the opportunity to review the bills is an abdication of our responsibility.

I encourage the members to support this motion to instruct our conferees on the Supplemental appropriations bill to include funding for border security and to require further military funding requests move through our regular authorization process for the fullest scrutiny by the authorizing committees.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the grounds 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 57 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 5:30 p.m. today.

□ 1737

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 5 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 95) establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2006, revising appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2005, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2007 through 2010, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

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

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MS. HERSETH

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. Herseth of South Dakota moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the concurrent resolution H. Con. Res. 95 be instructed, to the maximum extent possible within the scope of the conference—

(1) to recede to the following findings of the Senate: (A) Medicaid provides essential health care and long-term care services to more than 50 million low-income children, pregnant women, parents, individuals with disabilities, and senior citizens; and (B) Medicaid is a Federal guarantee that ensures the most vulnerable will have access to needed medical services;

(2) to strike reconciliation instructions to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and recede to the Senate by including language declaring that a reconciliation bill shall not be reported that achieves spending reductions that would (A) undermine the role the Medicaid program plays as a critical component of the health care system of the United States; (B) cap Federal Medicaid spending, or otherwise shift Medicaid cost burdens to State or local governments and their taxpayers and health providers; or (C) undermine the Federal guarantee of health insurance coverage Medicaid provides, which would threaten not only the health care safety net of the United States, but the entire health care system;

(3) to recede to the Senate on section 310 (entitled "Reserve Fund for the Bipartisan Medicaid Commission") of the Senate amendment; and

(4) to make adjustments necessary to offset the cost of these instructions without resulting in any increase in the deficit for any fiscal year covered by the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH).

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, to explain the motion, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The House-passed budget directs the Committee on Energy and Commerce to cut spending on programs within its jurisdiction by $20 billion over 5 years. The vast majority of this $20 billion in spending cuts, if not all of it, will likely fall on Medicaid. I and many of my colleagues in this body strongly oppose this language.

The majority of our counterparts in the Senate apparently share some of our concerns. The Senate approved an amendment by Senators SMITH and BINGAMAN to strike reconciliation instructions in the Senate budget that would have directed the Committee on Finance to cut spending by $15 billion over 5 years, which all would have been from Medicaid. The Senate amendment

also created a reserve fund allowing for the creation of a bipartisan commission on Medicaid reform.

This motion protects Medicaid by instructing conferees to follow the Senate's lead and strike reconciliation instructions that target Medicaid for funding cuts and instead include a $1.5 million reserve fund for the creation of a bipartisan Medicaid reform commission.

Forty-four of my Republican colleagues in the House recently wrote a letter to the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, urging him to remove Medicaid reductions in the budget resolution. In this letter they stated, ''We are concerned that the inclusion of up to $20 billion in reductions from projected growth in the Medicaid program will negatively impact people who depend on the program and the providers who deliver health care to them . . .''

''We strongly urge you to remove these reductions and the reconciliation instructions targeted at Medicaid and, in their place, include a $1.5 million reserve fund for the creation of a bipartisan Medicaid Commission . . .''

Fifty-two Senators, including several Republicans, voted to strike Medicaid cuts in the Senate budget resolution and instead allow for the creation of a bipartisan Medicaid commission. The amendment's sponsor in the Senate, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, stated that ''I would rather do this right than do this fast . . . I don't know where the original Senate cut of $14 billion came from. But I know what it is going to mean: another 60,000 Oregonians may be losing health care, pressuring private plans, overwhelming emergency rooms.''

During that same debate, Senator MCCAIN of Arizona stated that ''cuts to Medicaid that result in reduction of covered individuals would flood hospital emergency rooms with additional uninsured patients, forcing hospitals to absorb additional costs for uncompensated care.''

And Governors are virtually unanimous in their opposition to allowing arbitrary budget cuts to drive Medicaid policy. For example, the Republican Governor of Ohio said, ''We do not support recommendations that would save the Federal Government money at the expense of the States.'' Perhaps Arkansas's Republican Governor stated it best when he said, ''People need to remember that to balance the Federal budget off the backs of the poorest people in the country is simply unacceptable.''

And the American people agree. Four out of five Americans oppose cutting Medicaid to reduce the Federal debt, according to a poll released today by AARP. Across the country many hospitals, assisted living centers, and nursing homes have high Medicaid utilization rates and are reliant on Medicaid as a major source of funding.

But Medicaid is not keeping pace with the cost of providing health care. This is particularly true in rural States like South Dakota, which is one of the States hit hardest by Medicaid's shortfalls. According to a new report to be released tomorrow, Medicaid long-term care for economically disadvantaged elderly persons is underfunded by $4.5 billion annually. The results are both real and devastating.

In 2004, South Dakota's Evangelical Lutheran Good Samaritan Society facilities saw a net operating loss for Medicaid patients of over $3.5 million for the year. In January the Good Samaritan Society announced it would be closing three facilities in eastern South Dakota.

This means that for some South Dakotans, they will not have access to the medical and long-term care services they need, or they will find themselves moving further from their families in order to find an available facility. This also means the loss of jobs in our smaller communities. And it means as a Nation we are failing our poor, our elderly, and our rural communities.

Talk of cutting $20 billion out of the Medicaid system over the next 5 years is completely at odds with the needs of people in South Dakota and across America.

In fact, a coalition of 135 organizations that represent groups ranging from medical specialties to faith-based groups have asked the conferees to eliminate all proposed reductions in Federal funding for Medicaid from the final fiscal year 2006 budget. The letter, signed by the American Diabetes Association, Catholic Charities USA, and other organizations, said that the ''elimination of such cuts is essential for the health and long-term care of Medicaid enrollees, the providers who serve them, and State and local units of governments.''

□ 1745

That is why this motion is so important. It protects this critical program by instructing conferees to follow the Senate's lead and strike reconciliation instructions that target Medicaid for funding cuts. I urge my colleagues to support this motion and to protect Medicaid.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, this is a very interesting motion to instruct conferees. First of all, I am happy that we are at the point in time where we are able to go to the conference with the other body and complete our work on the Concurrent Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2006. This is never an easy road to travel when you are trying to accomplish so much, when you are trying to accomplish reforms in some very challenged programs that by anyone's estimation are unsustainable and are growing beyond the means not only of the Federal Government to fund but also State governments to fund.

It is always difficult when you have different ideas from different chairmen, different bodies, different leaders, different parties who want to come forward and make their mark on exactly what that spending blueprint should be. But I would like to acknowledge that I think we are all happy we are finally getting to a conference and the ability to work out our differences.

As such, I look at this motion to instruct conferees, and I am wondering what the controversy is. All of what the gentlewoman just said are comments that my colleagues on both sides, whether you are Republican or Democrat, have made throughout the entire debate over the budget.

We have an unsustainable program called Medicaid which is not serving the most vulnerable people in our society to the fullest extent that it should or that it must in order to meet not only the obligations that we have entrusted in the program but also to make sure that it is sustainable, not only in the short run of our budget, but also long term in our overall fiscal situation that our country faces and that many of our States face. So as I read the motion to instruct conferees, I am puzzled by what the controversy is.

It says we should recede to the following findings. Those findings are that Medicaid provides essential health care and long-term care services to more than 50 million low-income children, pregnant women, parents, probably grandparents as well and great grandparents of many of ours, individuals with disabilities and senior citizens; and that, B, Medicaid is a Federal guarantee that ensures the most vulnerable will have access to most needed medical services.

We all agree. There is nobody here that disagrees with that. That is what the program was set up for; and that is the reason why we are so intent on reforming it, so that it continues to meet that mission and continues to deliver quality health care services for our parents and our grandparents, children who may be of low-income families and people with disabilities and senior citizens. It is a guarantee. It is something that we all believe in. We are here to help people who cannot help themselves.

Unfortunately, this program in many instances in its current state, 40 years old now, you might not be surprised to hear that it needs a little bit of work, it needs a little bit of reforming. The Governors have figured that out, and they have come to Washington with proposals that find savings, not cuts. They are themselves proposing savings in the neighborhood of $8 billion to $9 billion, and that is just their first inception, that is just their first proposal, before we even go down that road.

Then I looked further at the motion to instruct conferees and it says: ''To strike reconciliation instructions to

the Committee on Energy and Commerce and recede to the Senate by including language declaring that a reconciliation bill shall not be reported that achieves spending reductions that would undermine the role the Medicaid program plays as a critical component of the health care system of the United States.''

I say again, there is no controversy in that. That is not the intent of the budget, that is not the intent of the conference, that certainly is not the intent of either reconciliation instruction. In fact, we think it is a pretty good idea to set up a conference and to set up an opportunity to take a look at this in some type forum, whether it is a task force, whether it is a working group, however you want to put it together, in order to come up with ideas and resolve this problem.

We want to invite the Governors to the table. Certainly they have the best perspective when it comes to how this program works in their individual States. Many of them have sought waivers in order to be able to reform the program on the ground in which they see it so that that program which delivers these essential services can be met and delivered in a more quality way to our seniors and to our citizens with disabilities, to our parents and grandparents, and to our most vulnerable who may be low income.

So I do not see the controversy. I understand that because, as the gentlewoman said, there are polls, there certainly is politics involved. Anytime that anyone wants to bring forward any kind of reform measure, the immediate thing is to rush breathlessly to the floor and claim that it is cutting funds for people, and it is cutting the most vulnerable and it is hurting people, and that is exactly what was said about the welfare reform bill when it came to the floor not 10 years ago, and it did not happen. It helped people. It unlocked from poverty thousands upon thousands of families and children in our society who all they needed was a hand up. For a while they may even have needed a handout. But because of the requirements that we passed in a bipartisan way, we were able to rise above the politics and the rhetoric and help people. That is what we want to do here.

There is not one Member who can come to the floor and say this Medicaid program is working in your State to its fullest extent, not one of you. Not one of you can say that. There is not one Member in the other body who can say that. There is, I dare say, not one Governor who can claim the Medicaid program in their State is working. So you are asking us here today in a political way, in a nonbinding motion to instruct, to do nothing.

Thankfully, that is not how you crafted technically your motion to instruct. You gave just a little bit of a backdoor, because you know as well as we do that this program needs attention, that it needs reformation, that it needs Governors and Congress and the administration to sit down and talk about the future of a program that is needed in order to deal with the most vulnerable in our society. So thank you for not crafting this in such a fail-safe way so that we had to vote against it and suggest that Medicaid should not be reformed, because, of course, it should.

I hope that is not what you are saying. If you are, say it. If you are saying do not reform Medicaid, do not touch it, do not change it, it is perfect, it is helping people, come to the floor and dare to say that. But if that is not what you are saying, then save that political rhetoric for some other time and let us work together to fix it.

That is what this ought to be about. Republican and Democrat Governors are certainly willing to do that. They are sitting down. I have got proposals here that add up to $8.6 billion of ideas that the Governors have already agreed to as a starting point. Now, are we claiming that those Governors are cutting? Are they gouging? Are they throwing people out on the street? Are they hurting seniors and people with disabilities?

Certainly that is not what we are saying. That is not what we would claim they are doing. They see a problem, they have come together to try to fix it, and that is what we should do as well. Reconciliation gives us that opportunity.

So I appreciate the gentlewoman's motion to instruct. It is crafted perfectly so that political points can be made. But there is just that little backdoor that says, you know what, even though we kind of like the Senate language, we like the fact that they are putting together ideas, we like the fact that the Governors are coming to the table, we heard all of that rhetoric, even though we want to make some political points today, there is a little bit of a backdoor so we can all vote for this and say that the Medicaid program, as most of our Governors would suggest, is unsustainable. It is unsustainable whether you are in the capital of your State or whether you are in Washington, D.C. And that is why we need to come together as Republicans and Democrats, in order to fix this.

So I appreciate the way the gentlewoman has crafted it. I am going to urge my colleagues to vote for the motion to instruct. I think it is well-crafted, to give everybody the opportunity to make the political points, to issue your press releases. I know you are going to do that. Knock yourselves out. I am sure they are already on the fax machine. But in the meantime, after all of the fax paper has cleared the air, let us sit down and talk about ways to fix this program so it actually does help people who are in need and were truly meant to be the focal point of this program when it was invented 40 years ago and which has rarely been changed from a Washington perspective ever since.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished Democrat whip.

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time, and I thank her for her leadership on this very important issue.

Cleverness says that when you are going to lose, declare victory. That is what the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) is going to do; he is going to declare victory, because what he says is there is consensus on his rhetoric. He is correct.

What there is not consensus on are the policies pursued by the chairman, the Committee on the Budget, and the majority. The chairman's budgets have put America $2.4 trillion in additional debt from when he took over just 4 years ago. As a result of putting us $2.4 trillion in additional debt, we are having trouble paying our bills.

This year alone we are going to have a budget deficit of half a trillion dollars. They do not count some of it. They pretend some of it is emergency spending, and they do not even count AMT fixes. There are a lot of things they do not count. But the fact of the matter is that their policies undercut their rhetoric, and the reason the chairman is going to support the gentlewoman's resolution is because of this chart: 44 of his Republican colleagues who said this is bad policy, do not do it. Not Democrats, Republicans. Forty-four of them.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for signing on to that letter, because you knew that the policies proposed by the Republican budget were, in this instance, not policies you wanted to pursue.

Madam Speaker, less than 4 weeks ago, on March 31, the President of the United States said, ''The essence of civilization is that the strong have a duty to protect the weak.'' On that very same day, the majority leader in this body, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), stated, ''The one major responsibility of a government is to protect innocent, vulnerable people from being preyed upon.''

I absolutely agree that we not only have a duty but we have a moral responsibility to protect the weakest and most vulnerable citizens in our Nation. That, I tell the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, is what Medicaid is all about. And the gentleman's rationalization that Medicaid must be fixed, in which he is also correct, we all agree. But like your Social Security solution, of privatizing Social Security because it has financial problems, realizing full well that your privatization does not affect solvency at all, is an empty solution, because you do not know how to solve it yet because you

have not come across with a suggestion.

All you have said is to cut the legs out from the most vulnerable, which Medicaid serves. That is what you have said. That is why these 44 colleagues of yours, not Democrats, Mr. Chairman, Republicans, 44 signed this letter.

You know you are going to lose this motion, and so you are going to agree with this motion on some rationalization that we suggest a commission to come up with a solution, because you are right, absolutely right: we know that we have to come up with a solution because we cannot let down the most vulnerable in our society.

□ 1800

But I do not understand, notwithstanding the Speaker's rhetoric, notwithstanding the rhetoric of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), notwithstanding the chairman's rhetoric, notwithstanding the President's rhetoric; if the President, the majority leader, and the House Republicans are truly concerned about protecting the weak and vulnerable, why are they so intent on slashing Medicaid funding so deeply?

The fact is, Medicaid finances health care for more than 58 million Americans, including 28 million low-income children, nearly 16 million parents, and nearly 15 million elderly and disabled citizens. Yet the House Republicans' budget would cut Medicaid funding by $20 billion over 5 years, a cut so draconian that 44 House Republicans, as I said, have said no to that cut.

I urge my colleagues to support this motion to instruct. My understanding is the chairman is going to support it. I am pleased about that, but nobody ought to misunderstand that ''this is a political judgment that we are going to lose, so we will pretend that we win.'' He did the same thing when the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) offered his motion and we were going to win last year.

We need to protect our vulnerable citizens. The President of the United States is correct, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is correct. Vote for this motion to instruct. Not only that, I hope the Chairman will take this motion to instruct not just as a request, but as a moral duty.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

I want Members who are listening, maybe in their offices or here on the floor, and anyone else that is interested in listening to this debate today, listen for four things. Listen to whether you hear anyone come to the floor today and defend the Medicaid program as it stands today as perfect. My colleagues did not hear the gentleman from Maryland say that because, of course, he does not agree with that. Listen to hear if you hear any Member come to the floor and say, absolutely not, you cannot find a nickel's worth of savings in the program. You will not hear any Member come to the floor today and say that. I dare say the gentleman from Maryland would not say that.

Listen to this: Did the gentleman say he was against reform? Of course not. The gentleman from Maryland knows that in Maryland, as in Iowa, the program needs help if it is going to meet the needs of a changing world and meet the needs of its original mission. And listen to hear whether you hear any of them come forward and disagree with the bipartisan result of the Governors coming forth with savings. Not one Member will come today, I would dare say, and suggest that they are going to disagree with the Governors who come forth with ideas. My colleagues will not hear that.

So make your political points; even bring in Social Security. Did my colleagues hear that one? Social Security was even raised today. Boy, we are going to hear all sorts of great arguments, but we will not hear one that says we cannot find savings, this program is perfect, we are against reform, and we disagree with the Governors. We will not hear that. That is why we need to move forward with a reform of the Medicaid program ushered in by this budget.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I say to the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, my suggestion is to come forward with a reform program. Let us consider it. But do not cut vulnerable people prior to coming up with solutions. Do not make them pay the price of losing Medicaid while we are trying to solve the problem. Let us solve the problem.

The gentleman is right, and we are not going to come to the floor saying there is no problem. But we are going to come to the floor and say, do not have vulnerable people let down while we are trying to solve that problem.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds to just say I have a reform idea right here from the Governors that I would agree to right now.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, the gentleman is on the Committee on Ways and Means. Pass it and make it policy.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, the Committee on Energy and Commerce has jurisdiction. But be that as it may, I yield myself 15 more seconds to say that all I am suggesting is there are some good ideas that are out there, and the budget is a vehicle to accomplish a reform schedule. That is what we are trying to agree to, and I appreciate the fact the gentleman wrote the motion to instruct to give us the opportunity to meet that reform schedule in a bipartisan way, I hope.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), my esteemed colleague and ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

(Mr. DINGELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the motion to instruct, and I observe that this motion instructs the conferees to recede to the Senate position. Instead of Medicaid cuts, a nonpartisan, independently appointed commission would be instructed to come up with improvements in the program. That is exactly what the gentleman from Iowa suggests.

Now, let us look. There is money here to make a better use of public funds. The MEDPAC, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission, observed that we overpay the HMOs by $20 billion. That happens to be just about exactly the amount of the cut that we are talking about here.

Every Governor in the United States is in favor of this motion. Medicaid is critically important to more than 50 million Americans. It provides health care for 1 in 4 children. It is a lifeline for the elderly and for individuals with disabilities. It pays for long-term care, and it helps those who have had the misfortune of becoming ill and needing help in their basic activities of daily living.

The proposed cuts in the program would cause undue harm to millions of our most vulnerable Americans. If a $10 billion cut were enacted, my home State alone stands to lose more than a quarter of a billion dollars over the next 5 years. I would tell the gentleman from Iowa, he better look to see what happens to his State. A bipartisan majority of both the House and Senate oppose cuts in this program. Nearly 1,000 State organizations and more than 800 national organizations have voiced strong opposition to this.

The problem is not Medicaid. It has done a better job in holding down costs than has private insurance. Medicaid is absorbing the costs of care not covered under Medicare. An independent look at Medicaid may show that there is a better solution, but the better solution does not involve blindly cutting monies now so desperately important to people of this kind and so urgent for the States.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume just to respond and say, okay, I stand corrected. I thought no one was going to come to the floor and say do nothing. But I guess there are going to be a few Members who come to the floor and say do nothing. I am surprised by that. I think there will be a bipartisan vote today to do something, but doing nothing I really believe is not an option, and I guess I am surprised that there will be Members who will come to the floor today and do absolutely nothing to help improve the Medicaid program.

But I know someone who wants to do something.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL), the very distinguished chairman from the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

As I look across the aisle, I see some of my colleagues who work with me on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and I truly believe that all of us want to do what is right. We want to find a solution.

The fact is that the issue is one that on a bipartisan basis Governors say has to be dealt with. In fact, as recently as only over a week ago, Governor Mark Warner, a Democrat Governor of Virginia, who is the chairperson of the Governors' Association, National Governors' Association, made this comment: ''We are on our way to a meltdown.'' That is the message that we hear repeatedly when we talk with Governors. And the reason is that the cost of Medicaid to States has now exceeded the cost of both elementary and secondary education in their State budgets, and they need relief. The relief that they seek in the current system is to come to Washington and ask for a waiver. And repeatedly, Governors come and say to us at the Federal level, the program that you have in place is too rigid. It does not allow us the flexibility to deal with the problems that we face in our State to give the best health care to our citizens. So they are asking for waivers.

I, for one, and I commend the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) for his efforts in this regard; I believe that now is the appropriate time for us to give the Governors that relief. I think that relief should come in the form of changing the program.

I had a Governor recently who said his approach to it is to ask the question, if you were drafting Medicaid today, would it look like what it looks like now? And everybody agrees it would not.

So I think this is an opportunity, one that we should not allow to be bypassed, one that we should work cooperatively across the aisle here in this body, as the Governors are working in a bipartisan fashion of their own. The gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) alluded to some points that the Governors have agreed to on a bipartisan basis, and certainly those are very significant. The score that I see now is about $8.6 billion on the score that I have seen on the parts that they have agreed to. I think there will be more. I think we will hear some very innovative suggestions from the Governors, and I think that if we work together and put aside our partisanship and try to do what is not only best for the citizens we represent in our congressional districts, but what our Governors do in our respective States and, working together, we will arrive at a solution.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the Democratic leader, the esteemed gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time, and I commend her for her leadership in bringing this very important motion to instruct to the floor.

It is crystal clear, Madam Speaker, that a majority of Members in both bodies oppose cuts to Medicaid. The other body voted to remove such cuts on the floor of the Senate. With 44 House Republicans signing a letter calling for no Medicaid cuts and a solid Democratic opposition, a majority of this body also prefers a solution with no Medicaid cuts.

The regular order, as my colleagues know, Madam Speaker, is to appoint conferees, instruct those conferees, resolve differences with the other body, and report back a conference agreement. But the Republican leadership knew they could not defeat a motion to protect Medicaid, so rather than follow the regular order, they negotiated behind closed doors to include Medicaid cuts in the final budget report, regardless of how the majority in both Houses vote and how we vote in this House on the motion to instruct.

I usually do not like to talk about process in the House, but this is a time when process has a very direct impact on policy, and a policy that has a direct impact on the health of the American people.

Press reports indicate that the final agreement between the House and Senate will contain between $8 billion to $10 billion in Medicaid cuts. This conference report would not only ignore the will of the majority of both houses but, according to the Congressional Budget Office, it would include deeper cuts than originally proposed by the President, and vehemently opposed in both houses.

Madam Speaker, States have undergone a wrenching budget process. When the President first proposed Medicaid cuts in early February, many Republican Governors spoke out against them. One of them, Republican Governor Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, said, ''People need to remember that to balance the Federal budget off the backs of the poorest people in the country is simply unacceptable.''

It is unacceptable but, unfortunately, it is standard operating procedure for the Republican leadership in Congress.

I am hopeful that a significant number of Republicans will join our motion to instruct, being true to the letter that they sent opposing cuts, and protect Medicaid.

If Congress cuts Medicaid funding, States will be forced to reduce Medicaid coverage or benefits, jeopardizing needed services for low-income Americans. Over the last 4 years, more than 5 million people have joined the ranks of the uninsured. That number would more than double if it were not for the Medicaid program.

Make no mistake: Cutting Medicaid funds will increase the number of low-income Americans who are uninsured to partially pay for $70 billion in tax cuts. Many of these uninsured poor Americans are children. I do not think that it really is a statement of our values in a budget to cut the health care for our children, for the poorest children in America, in order to give the tax cuts to the wealthiest people in America.

□ 1815

And yet at the end of the day, this budget will do all of that and increase our deficits. This is wrong. This is unjust. And I urge my colleagues to vote for this very important motion to instruct to return a conference report to this body with zero Medicaid cuts.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM), a member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding me some time. It is interesting to hear the comments of the distinguished minority whip and minority leader. But I am curious about something. I am curious how such a great party and the party that gave birth to some of the pillars of domestic policy in this country, has become the party of denial, the party of doing nothing.

When it comes to discussing Social Security reform, their answer is, do nothing. We have until 2040 or 2041.

When it came time to reform Medicare and even enrich and modernize the benefits available for seniors, their answer was vote against it. Do nothing.

And here today we are discussing a third pillar of domestic policy in this country that helps enrich the lives and provides a safety net for so many of those who are less fortunate in our society, and to put forward a reform proposal, and their answer is to do nothing.

Governor Mark Sanford, the Governor of the State of the ranking member of the Budget Committee, said the subject of Medicaid reform is important and timely. Our system, as currently configured, works fundamentally against the taxpayer and against the consumers in the form of Medicaid recipients and patients.

Governor Blunt of Missouri and Governor Granholm of Michigan agreed that the program is unsustainable.

Governor Vilsack of Iowa: ''If you do the numbers, they just do not add up.''

The South Dakota Governor, opening the legislative session, bemoaned the dramatic increases in how they are cutting into available funds for other folk, for other programs, and pointed out that the State health care program is growing at a 2 percent rate and Medicaid is going up at 18 percent, something that is unsustainable.

The Governors, on a bipartisan basis, have already, after this subject just coming forward weeks ago under the leadership of the gentleman from Iowa

(Chairman NUSSLE) and the Budget Committee, have already developed a plan that generates nearly $9 billion in savings, and that is the first draft.

How is it that the great party that stood for great opportunities to help those in need has gone into denial and said, we will not change a thing. Everyone agrees the rate is unsustainable. Everyone agrees the costs are eating up State budgets. Everyone agrees that there is tremendous opportunity for savings that can then benefit other important programs; but our answer is to do nothing, or to outsource the job to a commission. And if the pattern holds, when the commission, if it is appointed, comes back with their findings, they will besmirch the reputation of the members of that commission, particularly those from their own party who were selected in one form or another by the President or by the Congress. That is what happened with the Social Security Commission and the distinguished Senator Moynihan. Why would this be any different?

Why would the party that is so responsible for originating these grand ideas be so irresponsible about making them relevant to people of my generation or the distinguished gentlelady from South Dakota's generation? Why is that? Why would you outsource the responsibility to provide a solution?

It is an important step that the House Budget Committee took in directing the Energy and Commerce Committee to take a hard look at these programs and find savings. It did not specify where they would come from. It did not tell them how to do their job. It directed them to take a hard look at where 55 percent of our budget today is going in the form of mandatory spending. And a huge part of that is in the Medicaid program.

I would encourage all of us to agree that there is a problem and move forward with some commonsense reforms that include saving the taxpayers money when possible.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT), ranking member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, let me say in response to the last speaker that this party proudly presented a budget resolution that brought the budget to balance in the year 2012 and did not do it on the backs of the most deserving in our country, the sick and the elderly who depend upon Medicaid.

And lest there be some misunderstanding, this budget makes the deficit worse, not better, because it calls for $106 billion in additional tax cuts. And the primary purpose and function and reason for these Medicaid cuts is to diminish the $106 billion so it does not swell the deficit any more grossly out of proportion than it already is. This does not go to the bottom line and reduce the bottom line at all. It leaves us with a bigger deficit because it only partially offsets the $106 billion in tax reduction that the resolution also calls for. So it is not necessary. And that is recognized by the 44 Republican House Members who signed the letter urging that this resolution not contain any cuts in Medicaid.

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

I want to make sure people are, and Members are, listening to this debate and are reading the language, because again, if you want to come down here and vote politics again, you want to put out your press releases and fax machines are going whizzing around, hey, knock yourselves out.

But we have got a job to do down here, and we should read the language in front of us. And, again, it says that we should not report a reconciliation bill that achieves spending reductions. I just want to make sure people understand that, because I want to give you the actual numbers for Medicaid. If you are bored about numbers, turn down the sound because I am about to quote some numbers. But this is serious business.

I want to tell you what the Medicaid program is going to spend over the next 10 years. And I want you to listen to the numbers and the increases. This year we are going to spend $183 billion, which is almost a 4 percent increase from last year; $190 billion the next year, $202 billion. It goes up: $220. It goes up by 9 percent that year; $239 billion, goes up by almost 9 percent that year. $260 billion by 2010. By 2010, $260 billion. That is almost as much as we are spending on national defense right now. $282 billion, $304 billion. It goes up every single one of those years. Out of that $1.1 trillion or more, it is actually a little bit more than that I just quoted, we are saying in the House budget, even before we talk about a compromise with the other body, we are saying, instead of growing at an average rate of growth per year of 7½ percent, we want to grow at 7.3 percent.

We are going to grow every year. There are not spending reductions. Every single year of the House budget spending for Medicaid goes up. Every single year. Every year it goes up. There were no spending reductions.

Now, are we slowing down the growth?

Yes. And that is what the Governors have asked us to do. That is what they are coming here with proposals to accomplish. And their proposals that they have put forth, some have not even yet been scored, but the ones that have been scored by the Congressional Budget Office, which tries to add all that up and to find out what savings we have got, of the six main proposals that the bipartisan Governors have come forth with, they have already found $8.6 billion, and three of the proposals have not even yet been scored.

So to say there is no savings, to say that we are hurting the most vulnerable, to suggest that nobody wants reform, again, I would ask colleagues to listen to the debate.

Will there be political rhetoric today?

Yes. Unfortunately, that will be true. The same happened in the welfare reform debate. Members came to the floor saying we should not do anything. We should not make changes, we should not reform the program. Let us keep what we have got. We changed the program, and people were helped.

No Member is going to come to the floor today and say the Medicaid program is perfect. I dare say no Member would come to the floor and tell you that. No Member is going to come to the floor today and say we cannot find savings.

Actual cuts? I can understand why they might come to the floor. But that is not what is being proposed.

But can we find savings? Every Member will come to the floor today and say of course. If you look at a program long enough that is 40 years old and has never been changed, of course you can find savings, particularly one that in a bipartisan way every Governor is either asking to get out of through a waiver or is coming to Washington to suggest that we need to reform.

No Member is going to come to the floor today and say we should do absolutely nothing, with just a few exceptions. There may be a few Members who try and do that. And there will be no Members who come to the floor today and suggest that the Governors in a bipartisan way have put forth ideas that are not worthy of consideration. We need to consider it.

Again, I am very happy that the Members on the other side have given us a motion to instruct conferees with a fail-safe, with a trapdoor that allows us to keep the momentum of reform building and allows them to make their political points. That is what they are allowed to do, is to come to the floor and make their political points. But thank goodness we still have a process that says we have got to move forward.

This is an unsustainable growth rate, that every year the program grows and grows and grows. There are no cuts.

Are there savings that we suggest? Yes. That was true in welfare reform. It is true as we look at Medicaid. And we need to look for the savings, because without reform the program not only will bankrupt itself, but more important than all of the talk about numbers and budgets and all of those things, it will begin to hurt people who truly are the most vulnerable that this program endeavors to assist.

So the commission approach that the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) has put forward is a good idea. She has many cosponsors. That is not something that the budget itself can accomplish. But, certainly, we endorse that kind of an approach to look for ways to bring all interested parties together to find reform.

And I hope that instead of just putting out your faxes, which you will do, and make out your political statements, that is fine. We understand

that. But you will also, after all of the dust settles, come forward with your ideas the way Democratic Governors and Republican Governors have done, so that we can begin to resolve this issue and not just have rhetoric. We need results, not just the rhetoric of today. And that is what this budget accomplishes.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HERSETH. I would inquire as to the balance of our time remaining, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The gentlewoman from South Dakota has 15 minutes and the gentleman from Iowa has 4½ minutes.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK), ranking member of the Health Subcommittee of the Committee on Ways and Means.

(Mr. STARK asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I guess I would be willing to suggest that the Medicaid programs are perfect, but for one major problem, and that would be the Republican Party in the Congress of the United States. What changes would I make? I would enforce the ethics rules to keep their hands out of the pockets of the lobbyists for the pharmaceutical industry who fly them about in jets and give them hundreds of millions of dollars in campaign contributions, which keeps them from allowing reimportation of drugs which would save many of the Governors a good bit of money on their Medicaid programs.

Changing the ethics rules that let people who might make unethical moves would be another great move, so it would prevent the managed care industry from getting extra money in the Medicare bill which would prevent the Republicans having the money to help Medicaid.

□ 1830

The Medicaid growth is due largely to the lousy job the President has done in job growth, the worst job since Herbert Hoover and the last Republican who had low job growth which increases the demand on Medicaid and the number of poor children and low-income workers who are forced to get their medical care through Medicaid because they are out of work through no fault of their own.

So if we would have decent ethics rules, if we would allow reimportation of drugs, if we would stop allowing the lobbyists to buy votes, we would be able to get the kinds of reform that are needed. The money is currently available in the excesses we are paying to the pharmaceutical industry and the excesses we are paying to the managed care industry which the chair of the Committee on the Budget understands very well, and that is the reform that is needed.

Change Congress. Make the Republicans behave in an ethical manner, and you will have the money for Medicaid.

As Hubert Humphrey once said, "The moral test of Government is how that Government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

With all due respect for many of my colleagues, none of us could more eloquently make the case for Medicaid, which takes care of those in the dawn, twilight and shadows of life.

Yet the budget we are going to consider this week fails the moral test of government by requiring savings that will result in deep cuts in Medicaid and other programs that serve low-income, vulnerable populations.

A budget is a statement of priorities. Once again, we are faced with a Republican budget that put tax breaks for the rich and payola to corporate interests, ahead of basic government obligations.

Just as when we debated the Medicare bill in 2003, it appears we will be asked to vote on entitlement policy without adequate information as to its effect. We do not know, for example, how the cuts will be distributed across states and populations. How many people will lose coverage? How many states will be forced to raise taxes—and by how much.

To make up for the shortfall in funding and increased need?

The saddest part of this debate is that Republicans don't need to target Medicaid. We can raise more than the amount Republicans expect to extract from Medicaid and income security programs simply by eliminating the overpayments currently paid to Medicare HMOs.

We pay these plans more than we would for care provided through traditional Medicare. That's wrong!

In fact, MedPAC—the non-partisan Congressional advisory commission—has recommended that Congress enact changes that would result in "payment neutrality." Doing so would result in savings of more than $21 billion over 5 years—more than enough to offset this budget's proposed Medicaid cuts.

Sadly, I doubt Republicans will go after this low-hanging fruit. It would evoke howls of protest from their contributors. Consider this budget a word of warning to individuals in the dawn, twilight and shadows of life.

Those who run on a moral values platform should consider that when they cast their votes on the budget this week.

Vote for the Spratt Motion to Instruct, and against the Resolution itself later this week.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Herseth motion to instruct conferees.

The House-passed budget cuts, $20 billion for Medicaid. It denies States, health care providers, and low-income working families $20 billion for health care services they vitally need. While closing loopholes and fighting waste, fraud, and abuse is important, there is no way it is going to save near that amount. As our colleague from South Dakota has forcefully stated, a clear majority of the Congress opposes these cuts, and for good reason.

Medicaid provides health care to 52 million low-income children, pregnant women, parents and the elderly. It is a critical source of acute and long-term care for 13 million elderly and disabled. These are the people who would be affected by cutting billions out of Medicaid. Since the President took office, the number of uninsured has increased by 5.2 million. Medicaid enrollment grew by 6 million over the same period, covering many people who would otherwise have been uninsured. Even so, Medicaid costs have grown about half as fast as private health care insurance premiums.

Between 2000 and 2003, Medicaid per capita spending went up by 6.9 percent, while private insurance premiums went up almost twice that amount, 12.6 percent. And the growth in costs we have seen as a result of the skyrocketing health costs this President has allowed, not Medicaid itself.

If these cuts in Medicaid are made, the ranks of the uninsured are surely going to increase even more, weakening our economy, and health care would be more expensive because of fewer regular check-ups and preventative measures and a rise of emergency room procedures. That is why the National Governors Association opposes these cuts. It is why faith-based organizations across the board oppose these cuts. Organizations like the March of Dimes, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the AARP all oppose these cuts. That is why a majority of the Congress opposes these cuts.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this motion. Tell the conferees to remove Medicaid cuts from this budget.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, who has the right to close?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The proponent has the right to close.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I am the final speaker so I will reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK).

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the Herseth motion to instruct; and I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership as we stand with seniors, with disabled Americans, with working families, and with children as we unite against these Medicaid cuts.

This Medicaid program is working but it is woefully underfunded by the Republican-controlled majority in this Congress. Medicaid accounts for 25 percent of Michigan's budget. With an aging population and a weak economy where manufacturing jobs are being shipped abroad, we can ill afford to cut this safety net out from under our most needy citizens.

This House resolution would require between 15 and $20 billion in cuts in

Medicaid over 5 years. How can we ask between 1.8 to 2.5 million seniors, children, and low-income, hardworking families to sacrifice so there can be another $106 billion in tax cuts?

We have a responsibility to look at ways to modernize Medicaid, to help our States and provide better health care, but it is heartless to subject our most vulnerable citizens to the meat-axe approach of this budget.

This motion to instruct conferees asks to reject the Medicaid cuts and calls for a bipartisan, independent Medicaid commission to address the concerns.

Michigan's Medicaid program has grown 30 percent in 4 years, serving roughly 1.4 million citizens or 1 out of every 7 Michiganders. Who are these citizens? In 2004 Michigan Medicaid paid for about 70 percent of all the nursing home care in our State, 40 percent of all the births in our State; 27 percent of the adults on Medicaid have a job and are working. The State is meeting the growth in beneficiaries while holding down spending to approximately 1.5 percent.

It is time to stand up for their most vulnerable citizens and against these Medicaid cuts. It is the right thing to do. It is the moral thing to do. Vote for the motion to instruct.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, 44 Members on the Republican side defied their party, not because some deep-pocketed lobbyist asked them to, but because fighting for people in desperate need was and is the right thing to do.

Medicaid health and long-term coverage is already limited to the impoverished elderly in nursing homes, the lowest-income children, and other vulnerable populations. My friend, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) expressed shock that Medicaid costs have actually grown. I think he must know that private insurance growth in this country is greater than 12 percent, Medicare costs are going up around 7 or 8 percent. Medicaid costs are going up only about 6 percent, half the pace of private insurance. There is no cost-effective alternative to Medicaid. Medicaid is the cost-effective alternative.

Medicaid cuts would not only jeopardize 5 million elderly Americans who would lack access to nursing home care without it, these cuts would place every nursing home resident, on Medicaid or not, in this country at risk. Each year nursing homes serve 2.5 million Americans. Medicaid covers 70 percent of these Americans.

The very health and safety of nursing home residents hinges on adequate Medicaid reimbursement. As it stands, Medicaid funding is insufficient to cover both those Americans who need nursing home services and those who need home and community-based care. If the Federal Government makes further cuts in Medicaid, we must take responsibility in abandoning people who have no where else to turn.

Two-thirds of people in nursing homes have no living spouse or relative. The fact is we, the Medicaid program, the Federal Government, are all the family who cares for them that they have.

I hope that before any Member of this body votes against this motion, you might just imagine trading places with an elderly American in a nursing home. Put yourself in their shoes; then decide whether starving Medicaid is responsible for reprehensible.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT).

(Mr. SPRATT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SPRATT. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time.

Madam Speaker, the House and the Senate passed their own versions of budget resolutions on March 17. That was more than a month ago. I am glad that we finally are going to conference because that will bring the deliberations on the budget at least a bit out into the open. And if there is any aspect of the budget resolution that needs to be brought into the open and resolved with a public debate, all the stakeholders included, it is this provision that we have been discussing, and that is a provision that would cut Medicaid, over 5 years, by $20 billion.

This motion to instruct conferees protects Medicaid from those spending cuts. Let me explain how those spending cuts would come about. The House-passed Republican budget resolution directs the Committee on Energy and Commerce to cut spending on programming within its jurisdiction by $20 billion. But the Republican leadership has made it clear. The resolution calls for $20 billion in cuts within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, but the Republican leadership has made it clear that those cuts should not include Medicare. That only leaves Medicaid.

It leaves Medicaid subject to $20 billion in cuts over 5 years, per the language of the resolution passed by the House.

On our side of the aisle, all Democrats oppose unanimously the House budget resolution which included the Medicaid cut. Now, 44 Republicans have signed a letter urging that the Medicaid cut be dropped in the conference report. As a result, it appears that a majority of the House Members are on record against the Medicaid cuts. Medicaid cuts, therefore, should not be included if the conference report is to reflect the will of the majority in the conference report.

In the other body, the Senate, a majority also opposed the Medicaid cuts, with 52 Senators, including every Democrat and 7 Republicans, voting to strike the Medicaid cuts from the Senate budget resolution and, instead, to set up a bipartisan commission.

So the purpose of this motion is to formalize the fact that both houses, a majority in both houses, are formally on record as opposed to the cut in Medicaid of $20 billion. And this motion simply instructs the conferees, it does not suggest, it does not tell them to consider, it instructs the conferees to follow the Senate's lead and strike the reconciliation instructions that target Medicaid for funding cuts and, instead, put up $1.5 million so we can have a fair bipartisan Medicaid commission to make these decisions.

I am glad that the chairman of the Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), has said that he will recommend to his members to vote for this resolution. I am disturbed to hear him emphasize that it is nonbinding.

Given the fact that the majority in both houses support the dropping of this $20 billion cut in Medicaid, I think this should be, as the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) put it, a moral mandate for the conferees. If it will bring back a conference report that reflects the will of the House, it should not include $20 million in cuts in the Medicaid program.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to read a part of a letter from the National Governors Association to both the Speaker and the Democratic leader and Senator FRIST and Senator REID.

It says, ''Reform, however, should not be part of a 2006 fiscal year budget reduction and reconciliation process, especially if it does nothing more than shift additional costs to the States.''

We have a problem with health care costs in our country. Medicaid is one part of it. Medicare costs and private insurance and private health care is actually rising higher faster than Medicaid. Yet what we are doing with this budget resolution is actually penalizing senior citizens, and particularly children, because so much of our children's hospitals, so much of their funding comes from Medicaid because they deal with children totally.

I know in Houston, the Texas Medical Center, we have the Texas Children's Hospital, over 50 percent of their funding comes from Medicaid because they take care of children. We have to deal with health care costs, but let us not balance it on the backs of our children and our senior citizens.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION,
December 22, 2004.

Hon. BILL FRIST,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. HARRY REID,
Minority Leader-elect, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.
Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FRIST, SENATOR REID, SPEAKER HASTERT, AND REPRESENTATIVE PELOSI: The Nation's Governors look forward to working closely with the Administration and Congress to reform Medicaid. Reforming the Medicaid system is the highest priority for the Governors, and will result in cost savings and efficiencies for both the federal and state governments. Reform, however, should not be part of a 2006 fiscal year budget reduction and reconciliation process, especially if it does nothing more than shift additional costs to states.

Governors are committed to administering the Medicaid program in a very cost-effective way, and as equal partners in the program have a tremendous incentive to continue doing so. This is reflected in the fact that the annual growth in Medicaid per capita spending has not exceeded approximately 4.5 percent per year, substantially below the growth rate of private health insurance premiums, which have averaged 12.5 percent per year for the last three years. Total Medicaid costs, however, are growing at a rate of 12 percent per year and now total Medicaid expenditures exceed that of Medicare primarily due to two major factors that are largely beyond the control of states. First, states, over the last four years, have experienced large case load increases of approximately 33 percent. Second, and far more costly to states, are the impacts of long-term care and of the dual eligible population. Medicaid currently accounts for 50 percent of all long-term care dollars and finances the care for 70 percent of all people in nursing homes. Furthermore, 42 percent of all Medicaid expenditures are spent on Medicare beneficiaries, despite the fact that they comprise a small percentage of the Medicaid caseload and are already fully insured by the Medicare program. Benefits for the dual eligible population should be 100 percent financed by Medicare.

We agree that maintaining the status quo in Medicaid is not acceptable. However, it is equally unacceptable in any deficit reduction strategy to simply shift federal costs to states, as Medicaid continues to impose sever strains on state budgets. Our most recent survey of states shows Medicaid now averages 22 percent of state budgets. This commitment has caused a strain on funding for other crucial state responsibilities. These funding challenges will become more acute as states absorb new costs to help implement the Medicare Modernization Act for the millions of dual eligible beneficiaries.

We look forward to working with you on Medicaid reform.

Sincerely,

GOVERNOR MARK R. WARNER,
Chairman.
GOVERNOR MIKE HUCKABEE,
Vice Chairman.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NUSSLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, those who actually administer the Medicaid program, our State Governors, have clearly told us in a bipartisan way that Medicaid must be reformed.

Wake up.

For those of you who are about to vote on this motion, this is a good motion. What it does is it says it is time to reform the program. It is time to consider the proposals that the Governors have put forth in a bipartisan way. They have clearly told us that their hands have been tied.

□ 1845

Their hands have been tied, Madam Speaker, by a program that is inefficient. It is ridiculously out of date, a health care delivery system that has not and will not under its current structure deal with the demands of the 21st century.

There is not one Governor that is suggesting do nothing. There is not one Member on the Republican side of the aisle that is suggesting do nothing. The 44 Members who signed the letter saying we are concerned about the future of Medicaid, they are not saying do nothing.

Everyone who is interested in the reform of this program understands that the budget this year gives us a schedule and an opportunity to finally get our arms around the Medicaid program.

I understand that there are going to be all sorts of political press releases put out about gouging and cutting and all sorts of things like that; but if anyone is interested in the actual technical language of the budget, they will discover that every single year the program under the House budget grows, every year.

What we are suggesting is that, with reform, it does not have to grow as much. Instead of growing at 7.5 percent, it can grow at a level a little lower, maybe 7.3 percent or 7.4 percent. Every year it should still grow because there are vulnerable people, there are senior citizens, there are people with disabilities who rely on this program. Our States rely on this program. We rely on this program in order to meet the needs of many people in this country who cannot help themselves.

Do not let anybody fool my colleagues. No one came to the floor today in support of this motion and said the program's perfect; the Governors are wrong; we do not like what they came up with; we do not think we should reform the program.

In fact, let us look at the reforms they have come up with. They have said let us restructure the pharmacy reimbursements to more closely align with the Medicaid pharmacy payments and pharmacy costs. That alone will save $5 billion. Bipartisan support from the Governors. I dare say we could support that here today.

Second proposal, revising what is called ''asset transfer.'' That will save the government $1.4 billion. Bipartisan support by the Governors.

Please do not come to the floor or issue press releases today that says do nothing. I understand my colleagues want to make a political point. That is fine. That is what motions to instruct conferees often do, but we are going to vote on a budget later on this week that says it is time to do something, it is time to reform the program, it is time to save a little bit of money and improve a program that is for our most deserved people, people who cannot help themselves. This is something we can do in a bipartisan way.

The same way Governors in a bipartisan way have come forward with their ideas, I would invite all Members to let their members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce know what their ideas are because we are going to go forward with reform. It is not going to actually cut any money. It is going to find savings. It is going to improve a program. It is going to reform it.

If the gentlewoman, who is the proponent of this motion, thinks the program is perfect, let her say so. If she thinks that we cannot find any savings, let her say so. If she thinks the Governors are wrong, let her say so. But no Member has come to the floor to say that yet today.

So that is why we should support this motion and move the budget forward to reform the Medicaid program and save some money as well.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to thank all of my colleagues who spoke in support of this motion to instruct conferees, including the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) and his willingness to encourage his Republican colleagues to support this important motion.

In response to the closing of the gentleman from Iowa, I do not stand here today, nor do my colleagues, suggesting that we do nothing. I do not stand here today suggesting we cannot find savings. I do not stand here today suggesting that we cannot find a way, in a bipartisan manner, to reform Medicaid.

To the extent that there are press releases that go out to constituents who will be breathing a sigh of relief, from Governors to health care providers, to advocates of disabled citizens and the elderly and children, it will be that we found agreement in this body to supplement the important work of the Governors across this country to undertake real reform, to find those savings but not to let arbitrary cuts drive the reform; and that is exactly what the House budget resolution did. It is exactly what this motion to instruct conferees attempts to set right.

Those in my generation understand that we cannot do nothing, whether it comes to Social Security reform or Medicaid reform; but we also understand that the facts speak for themselves, that we have time to do this right, rather than to work so fast and to let arbitrary cuts of $20 billion over 5 years drive the reform; that it should truly have a commission and the $1.5

million today this motion to instruct would encourage to have set aside in the reserve fund to have a bipartisan commission undertake this important task of reform.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I voted against the FY2006 Concurrent Budget Resolution that was reported by the House Budget Committee and narrowly passed the House on a 218–214 vote last month. I did so for a variety of reasons.

First, President Bush and the majority party in this Congress want us to keep borrowing against our future and that of our children, and perhaps their children. The budget deficit for this year is a record $427 billion. We added $114 billion to the deficit in February, the first time it has ever gone over $100 billion in one month. This is how we have added more to the national debt in the past four years than in the prior two centuries of our nation's history. Therefore, a vote in favor of this budget resolution is a vote for more "borrow and spend" policies that are responsible for our country's current fiscal plight.

Second, the House-passed budget plan shortchanges many Americans who are most deserving or in need of help, including our veterans, children, and elderly. At the same time, it slashes funding for many of our nation's important priorities—education, healthcare, AMTRAK and alternative transportation and energy initiatives, homeland security, environmental protection, job training, research and development, and small business innovation.

Let me cite a few glaring examples.

The House-passed budget cuts veterans' health care by $14 billion below what is currently needed over the next five years. These cuts can only be achieved by imposing new fees for veterans's healthcare, or by reducing veterans' benefits such as disability pay, pension benefits, or education benefits.

It actually cuts funding for education programs by $2.5 billion for next fiscal year relative to Fiscal Year 2005, and $38 billion over the next five years below what is needed to maintain the status quo. It actually matches the budget President Bush sent to Congress last month, which called for the elimination of 48 education programs worth $4.3 billion. These cuts will include $1.3 billion less for vocational education, as well as less funding for elementary, secondary, and college aid programs.

It also fails to protect and strengthen Social Security. It calls for spending every penny of the Social Security Trust Fund surplus to continue to help finance record deficits and continued tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. Unlike the alternative budget plan I voted for, the House-passed budget plan contains no budget enforcement mechanisms to protect the current surplus Social Security Trust Fund. Instead, President Bush and the supporters of this budget resolution advocate a Social Security privatization scheme that would weaken Social Security upon which so many elderly and disabled Americans depend just to make ends meet. In fact, there is not one cent in the House-passed budget plan to meet any of the $754 billion price tag needed between now and 2015 to create private accounts.

Third, the House-passed budget resolution is incomplete and misleading. It does not address the ongoing costs of the U.S. military occupation of Iraq and the war on terrorism. Then, the budget also invokes an assumption that economic growth will reduce deficits. In fact, it fails to show any deficit figures at all after 2010. Budgets should not be based on wishful thinking.

How is that we confront both increased deficits and serious program cuts in the same budget? Because the majority party in this Congress continues to push tax cuts for those who need them the least. The results are growing inequity in American society and mounting anxiety in financial markets.

I believe this Congress can and should make better choices and adopt a much more balanced and fiscally responsible alternative budget plan—one that more closely reflects the values of most Americans, the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, and the aspirations of our children. That is why I voted for the alternative budget plan offered by my colleague, U.S. Representative JOHN SPRATT of South Carolina. Had it been adopted, it would have insisted upon more fiscal discipline with budgets that pay as you go this year and beyond. It would have offered more help and hope for all Americans to achieve greater financial security. That means investing more in the American people and in deserving programs to help create good-paying jobs, improve education, lower healthcare costs, make college more affordable, grow small businesses, keep faith with our veterans and military families, protects our homeland, and promotes environmental sustainability.

In so doing, we could build upon what has worked in the past when our economy was growing by leaps and bounds and creating millions of new jobs, as recently as the 1990s. We could abandon the fraud of supply-side economics, once and for all, step up, and reassert control over shaping our preferred economic future—one that offers more good jobs, a higher standard of living, and real economic opportunity for all of the American people. Sadly, this budget resolution takes us farther down the wrong track.

If we want to strengthen our economy again, in the future, if we want to create new, good-paying jobs for all of our people, and promote broad-based, sustainable economic development, then I believe we must become more creative and provide more support from the public and private sector for cutting-edge research and development. We have to stop borrowing and spending. We have to stop eating our seed corn. We have to provide increased and more sustained support from the public and private sectors for basic research and development.

Up to now, America has always been a nation of explorers, creators, and inventors. We need to regain that edge and ride a new wave of research and follow-on commercial development into a new age of economic growth and prosperity. But the budget resolution approval in the House last week does none of this. The supporters of the Republican budget plan don't want to keep faith and invest in the American people, increase federal support for research, development, and entrepreneurial drive, and rebuild American competitiveness in the global economy. If they did, they could not in good conscience have voted for the skewed priorities of the recently-approved budget resolution and the Draconian, counterproductive cuts it will dictate.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the motion to instruct.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. HERSETH. Madam 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, further proceedings are postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order: motion to instruct on H.R. 1268, de novo; motion to instruct on H. Con. Res. 95, by the yeas and nays.

Any electronic votes will be conducted as 15-minute votes.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1268, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question on the motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 1268.

The Clerk will designate the motion.

The Clerk designated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct conferees offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SABO. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 417, nays 4, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 133]

YEAS—417

Abercrombie	Berkley	Boustany
Ackerman	Berman	Boyd
Aderholt	Berry	Bradley (NH)
Akin	Biggert	Brady (PA)
Alexander	Bilirakis	Brown (OH)
Allen	Bishop (GA)	Brown (SC)
Andrews	Bishop (NY)	Brown-Waite, Ginny
Baca	Bishop (UT)	Burgess
Bachus	Blackburn	Burton (IN)
Baird	Blumenauer	Butterfield
Baker	Blunt	Buyer
Baldwin	Boehlert	Calvert
Barrett (SC)	Boehner	Camp
Barrow	Bonilla	Cannon
Bartlett (MD)	Bonner	Cantor
Barton (TX)	Bono	Capito
Bass	Boozman	Capps
Bean	Boren	Capuano
Beauprez	Boswell	Cardin
Becerra	Boucher	

Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cox
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Flake
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Frank (MA)
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Maloney
Manzullo
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Royce
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Souder
Spratt
Stark
Stearns
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—4

Coble
Feeney
Tiahrt
Tiberi

NOT VOTING—13

Brady (TX)
Brown, Corrine
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Gutierrez
Harris
Hooley
Jenkins
Lee
Murtha
Rothman
Westmoreland
Wicker

□ 1916

Messrs. COX, CULBERSON, LINDER and McHENRY changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to instruct was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H. CON. RES. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The pending business is the question on the motion to instruct conferees on H. Con. Res. 95, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk will designate the motion.

The Clerk designated the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH).

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 348, nays 72, not voting 14, as follows:

[Roll No. 134]

YEAS—348

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Calvert
Camp
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Castle
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Cummings
Cunningham
Davis (LA)
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
DeLay
Dent
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall
Harman
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hefley
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hyde
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kucinich
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Leach
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Maloney
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Menendez
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Ney
Northup
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Platts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (LA)
Rogers (KY)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Sensenbrenner
Serrano
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simmons
Simpson
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Sodrel
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor (MS)
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—72

Akin
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bishop (UT)

Blackburn	Hensarling	Paul
Bonilla	Herger	Pearce
Boustany	Hostettler	Pence
Burgess	Hunter	Pitts
Buyer	Inglis (SC)	Poe
Cannon	Istook	Radanovich
Carter	Johnson, Sam	Rogers (MI)
Chabot	King (IA)	Rohrabacher
Conaway	Kingston	Royce
Cox	Kolbe	Sessions
Culberson	Linder	Shadegg
Deal (GA)	Mack	Souder
Duncan	Marchant	Stearns
Feeney	McHenry	Tancredo
Ferguson	Miller (FL)	Taylor (NC)
Flake	Murphy	Terry
Foxx	Musgrave	Thomas
Franks (AZ)	Myrick	Thornberry
Garrett (NJ)	Neugebauer	Tiahrt
Gingrey	Norwood	Tiberi
Gutknecht	Nunes	Wamp
Hayworth	Otter	Weldon (FL)

NOT VOTING—14

Brady (TX)	Harris	Murtha
Brown, Corrine	Hooley	Rothman
Diaz-Balart, L.	Jenkins	Westmoreland
Diaz-Balart, M.	Kilpatrick (MI)	Wicker
Gutierrez	Lee	

□ 1934

Messrs. HAYWORTH, MURPHY, and HERGER changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

So the motion to instruct was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber today. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 133 and 134.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 1268, EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DEFENSE, THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR, AND TSUNAMI RELIEF, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees: Messrs. LEWIS of California, YOUNG of Florida, REGULA, ROGERS of Kentucky, WOLF, KOLBE, WALSH, TAYLOR of North Carolina, HOBSON, BONILLA, KNOLLENBERG, OBEY, MURTHA, DICKS, SABO, MOLLOHAN, VISCLOSKY, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. EDWARDS.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H. Con. Res. 95, CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees: Messrs. NUSSLE, RYUN of Kansas, and SPRATT.

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO TICKET TO WORK AND WORK INCENTIVES ADVISORY PANEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 101(f)(3) of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, (42 U.S.C. 1320b–19), and the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member on the part of the House to the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Advisory Panel:

Mr. J. Russell Doumas, Columbia, Missouri, to a 4-year term.

PERMITTING OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO BE TAKEN WHILE HOUSE IS IN SESSION

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 232) permitting official photographs of the House of Representatives to be taken while the House is in actual session on a date designated by the Speaker, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentlewoman from Michigan to explain the purpose of this resolution.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 232. This is a resolution permitting the taking of the official photographs of the House of Representatives. It is a biennial official photo of the House of Representatives. It has really become a tradition for this institution. It not only is a keepsake for the Members, but it also serves as a very valuable and important historical memento as well and a record for future generations. The picture actually will be taken tomorrow morning, I think right after 1-minute speeches. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask for support of this resolution.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I support this routine resolution required to authorize the official photographs of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 232

Resolved, That on such date as the Speaker of the House of Representatives may designate, official photographs of the House may be taken while the House is in actual session. Payment for the costs associated with taking, preparing, and distributing such photographs may be made from the applicable accounts of the House of Representatives.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR EXPENSES OF CERTAIN COMMITTEES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan, from the Committee on House Administration, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–54) on the resolution (H. Res. 224) providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Ninth Congress, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBERS AS COSPONSORS OF H.R. 1762

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have the following names removed as a cosponsors of H.R. 1762: Mr. FEENEY of Florida, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, and Mr. JINDAL of Louisiana.

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

There was no objection.

ETHICS PROBLEMS IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks half a dozen Ohio newspapers have used the following terms to describe recent ethics problems proliferating through the United States Congress: acts of hypocrisy; national moral lapse; disgrace; dirty moves; ethically corrupt; unethical behavior; multi-indictment-producing investigation; illegal political fundraising; campaign money spigot; the very appearance of evil; and, finally, Mr. Speaker, sugar daddy.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this Nation deserve better from the People's house.

DELAY MUST STEP DOWN

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, my constituents continue to contact me about the charges mounting over the actions of some Republicans in the House. In fact, one constituent referred to an ''embarrassing and growing mess.'' Over the past year, I have received letters revealing disgust, anger at the Republicans and their disregard for House rules.

Just this past week, a constituent wrote me from Mill Valley, California, saying, ''I am tired of all the useless finger pointing. I am particularly tired of hearing one Republican in particular go on about the 'politics of personal destruction,' which he seems to practice

daily even as he blames it on his enemies.''

My constituents share the views of many citizens across the Nation. They want an unbiased investigation into these ethics matters. They want to know that politicians are listening to their hearts, not the lobbyists that are paying for their meals.

It is time for the Republicans to own up to abuses of the House rules. The American people deserve no less.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

90TH COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, which actually took place on April 24, last Sunday. As the first genocide of the 20th Century, it is imperative that we remember this atrocity and collectively demand reaffirmation of this crime against humanity.

Just this week I was joined by my co-chair of the Armenian Caucus and 176 additional Members of Congress in sending yet another joint congressional letter to President Bush urging him to use the word ''genocide'' in his April 24 statement. With over 178 signatures, which is 9 more than last year, the message in this letter is loud and clear: that 90 years is too long to wait for justice to be served and proper recognition to be made.

Mr. Speaker, I received today a copy of President Bush's statement with regard to the April 24 commemoration, and, unfortunately, once again he did not use the term ''genocide.'' And I think that is unfortunate because it has been consistently the case that this Congress and the United States in general over the last 90 years has referred to the Armenian genocide as a genocide, and it is unfortunate that the President continues not to use the term.

This past Wednesday the Caucus, with the cooperation of the Armenian American community, organized a commemorative event on Capitol Hill in the Cannon Caucus room. We were joined by over 350 members of the community as well as numerous Senators and Members of Congress who all spoke on one message: that the United States owes it to the Armenian American community, to the 1.5 million that were massacred in the genocide, and to its own history to reaffirm what is a fact.

As we saw on Wednesday night and as we have seen time and time again, the United States has a proud history of action and response to the Armenian genocide. During a time when hundreds of thousands were left orphaned and starving, a time when a nation was on the verge of complete extermination, the U.S. chose to step up. Individuals like Ambassador Morgenthau and Leslie Davis witnessed the atrocities firsthand, and their conscience did not allow them to simply look the other way. It is now time that the U.S. stops looking the other way, reaffirms what we all know to be fact, and properly recognizes the Armenian genocide.

I wanted to mention that I was very proud earlier this year when our Ambassador to Armenia, Ambassador Evans, referred to the Armenian genocide as a genocide, and it was unfortunate that he was essentially rebuked by the State Department because of the words he used. Because the fact of the matter is that when we talk about the Armenian genocide, we are simply acknowledging historical fact, and we feel very strongly that if at the time when the genocide occurred, the world and the United States, if we had taken more notice and had tried to prevent it, I think it would have served as a lesson so that the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews and so many other atrocities that took place in the 20th century would not have occurred. If we are going to see a situation in the future in this 21st century when we do not repeat the mistakes of the past, we must acknowledge the Armenian genocide.

We know even now, history in the last 100 years has witnessed more horrible episodes since the Armenian genocide. As we speak, the Sudanese Government is taking a page out of the Turkish Government's denial playbook and continuing the vicious cycle of genocide denial in what is happening in Darfur. If we are ever to live in a world where crimes do not go unpunished and fundamental human rights are respected and preserved, we must come to recognize the Armenian genocide, thus allowing for proper reparations and restitutions to be made.

I was very upset, Mr. Speaker, on Saturday when I read in the New York Times that the Turkish envoy to the United States continued to say that the only reason why Armenians and Americans wanted the genocide recognized was because they wanted restitution or they wanted reparations. That is simply not true. But it is also true that restitution and reparations must be made. For those who commit a state-sponsored genocide or a state-sponsored massacre, it is important that the state, in this case, Turkey, acknowledge that it occurred and that restitution and reparations are made, just as in the case with Germany in the case of the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to introducing a genocide resolution with my colleagues in the 109th Congress, and as we did in the 108th Congress and the 106th. We will do everything in our power to get legislation passed and reaffirm the U.S. record on the Armenian genocide. Today the United States has the profound responsibility of carrying on the tradition and the work of our predecessors in continuing to combat genocide whenever and wherever it takes place. We must show the world that individuals such as Ambassador Morgenthau did not stay quiet 90 years ago, and we in Congress certainly owe it to them not to stay quiet today.

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. April 24, 2005 marked the day 90 years ago that began a bloody eight-year period during which 1.5 million Armenians lost their lives as a result of this tragic event.

We must take this opportunity to heal the wounds of those who survived this calamity, as well as the Armenian people as a whole. Let us officially acknowledge this regrettable moment in human history, as formal recognition is nearly four generations overdue. By finally closing this chapter, we would not only take positive steps towards normalizing relations between Turkey and Armenia, but also help to prevent future tragedies.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Armenian Americans nationwide for their contributions to our country. Through the preservation of their heritage, faith and traditions, Armenian Americans join the multitude of immigrants from many different cultures who contribute to the rich diversity we celebrate together as a Nation.

Mr. Speaker, woven deeply into the fabric of our culture, Americans stand for freedom and basic human rights for all. Let us further demonstrate our deep conviction for the ideals we hold dear in our resolute opposition to crimes against humanity and officially recognize the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today we gather to remember and commemorate the Armenian Genocide, one of the darkest chapters of World War I, and the first of the series of genocides we saw in the 20th Century.

The Armenian Genocide is sometimes called the ''Forgotten Genocide.'' In fact, as most of you know, back in 1939, prior to the invasion of Poland, Adolph Hitler argued that his plans for a Jewish holocaust would, in the end, be tolerated by the West, stating: ''After all, who remembers the Armenians.'' Who remembers the Armenians? Today, we provide an answer: We Do! We Remember!

We do so because it is important, indeed it is essential to remember and reflect upon these events, but we also do so because we know that the Armenian people today struggle on an ongoing basis to confront and surmount the legacies and the consequences of those dark days.

Consider, for a moment, what might have been.

At the end of the first World War, the American public was acutely aware of the atrocities that had been committed against the Armenian people from 1915 on—atrocities that we knew had resulted in the death of more than 1 million Armenians and left the remaining Armenian population starving and destitute.

At the time, U.S. Ambassador Henry Morganthau reported that ''When the Turkish

authorities gave the orders for these deportations, they were simply giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well, and in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact.''

A military mission headed by Major General James Harbord in 1919 had been sent to report on conditions in the region and make recommendations to U.S. policy makers. General Harbord sent a clear message about the defenselessness of the Armenians and the dangers they still faced.

By the time of the Paris Peace negotiations at the end of the War, President Wilson was committed to the notion of using the proposed League of Nations to help the Armenians. In a September 6, 1919 speech on the Treaty creating the League, he spoke of the Armenian Genocide, ''When I think of words piled upon words, of debate following debate, when these unspeakable things that cannot be handled until the debate is over are happening, in these pitiful parts of the world, I wonder that men do not wake up to the moral responsibility of what they are doing. Great peoples are driven out upon a desert, where there is no food and can be none, and they are driven to die, and then men, women, and children thrown into a common grave, so imperfectly covered up that here and there is a pitiful arm stretched out to heaven, and there is no pity in the world. When shall we wake up to the moral responsibility of this great occasion?''

On May 24, 1920, Wilson proposed to create a U.S. mandate in Armenia, in which we would have sent in troops to maintain the peace and provide assistance to help the Armenian people establish a functioning government and economy.

But the proposed U.S. mandate never occurred. Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge from Massachusetts, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who earlier had championed the cause of the Armenians, refused to support President Wilson's proposed Mandate. Senator Lodge said at the time, ''To invite this country to take charge of that crossroads of the nations in Armenia, to commit itself to sending its troops there for an indefinite period, and to bear the expenses involved for an indefinite period, is something for which I could never bring myself to vote.'' And on June 1, 1920, he, along with the other Republican isolationists in the Senate voted 34 to 43 and 34 to 41 against two Democratic amendments that would have fully or partially authorized the Mandate.

And so, Armenia was left on its own, open to attack from both Turkey and the Soviet Union. And the Armenians made a fateful decision. Rather than accept Turkish dominance and the prospect of additional killings, they signed an agreement with the Soviet leadership's point man in the Caucuses—a man named Josef Stalin—to join the Soviet Union. That fateful decision led them to more than 60 years of Armenian suffering under the yoke of the Communists.

So, as we all gather together to consider the legacy of the Armenian genocide and the Diaspora it created, it is also appropriate for America as a nation to consider what can be done to give something back to those who, by tragic circumstances, were forced to live through unspeakable atrocities during the Genocide only to then come under the control of a brutal Soviet rule.

Armenia today faces enormous economic and political challenges: It has hostile neighbors. It faces blockades that stifle trade and economic opportunities. It needs economic and military assistance.

There is much that the U.S. government can and should do to assist the Armenian people: We should grant Armenia Permanent Normal Trading Relations status, so as to facilitate the growth of trade and economic relations. We should provide Armenia with the economic and military assistance it needs to develop its economy and ensure its security. We should press for an end to the Turkish and Azerbaijani economic blockades.

The writer Milan Kundera once wrote that ''The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.'' There are those that would deny the Armenian Genocide, just as there are those that deny the reality of the Nazi Holocaust. In commemorating the Armenian Genocide, as we do this evening, we all collectively engage in that struggle of memory against forgetting. But we do this not only to remember the past, but to animate the future with a commitment to prevent such things from ever happening again, and to strive towards making a better future for the Armenian people, a people who have suffered so much.

In September of 1919, President Woodrow Wilson spoke of his vision of a future Armenia. He said, ''Armenia is to be redeemed . . . So that at last this great people, struggling through night after night of terror, knowing not when they may come out into a time when they can enjoy their rights as free people that they never dreamed they would be able to exercise.''

It has taken Armenia decades to reach a point where its people could enjoy their rights as a free people—the rights Wilson spoke of. Today, we have an opportunity to help ensure that they can build a better future. And so, I look forward to continuing to work with the Armenian-American community and Members of the Congressional Caucus on Armenia to address the issues facing this region, so that together we build something positive, something hopeful, something good for the future—a peaceful, prosperous Armenia with close ties to the United States.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian Genocide is fully documented in the U.S. archives and through an overwhelming body of firsthand, governmental, and diplomatic evidence. The only party denying the Armenian Genocide is the Turkish government.

As a young man, I remember learning about the Armenian genocide by listening to the experiences of the men and women who experienced it firsthand. Many of the survivors of this experience fled to the United States, and through time established communities throughout the country, including my district.

California is home to the largest Armenian-American population in the United States. The California State Assembly designated April 24, 1997 as ''California Day of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–23, and for the Victims of the Sumgait Pogroms of 1988 and Baku Riots of 1990.''

Morally, it is wrong for the American people to be complicit in the Turkish government's effort to deny the suffering and death of over 1.5 million people.

Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide sets a dangerous precedent that makes future genocides more likely. Adolf Hitler, while planning the Holocaust, silenced the potential reservations of his generals by asking: ''Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?''

As a Nation that values the freedom of speech and assembly, we must admit that this event occurred, and force Turkey to do likewise.

Additionally, we must ask the EU to refuse Turkey's application to join the EU until Turkey accepts their role in the genocide against the Armenian people.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to remind the world that the 24th of April marked the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a systematic and deliberate campaign of genocide of the Ottoman Empire. Also, it marked yet another year without the U.S. formally recognizing the atrocities that occurred. Considering how well documented the genocide is in the U.S. archives and through an overwhelming body of first-hand, governmental, and diplomatic evidence this is nothing less than a disgrace. I also rise to reaffirm my support for the adoption of the Genocide Resolution H. Res 193, which was introduced last Congress by Rep. PALLONE. Unfortunately, even though this legislation passed unanimously out of my committee, had 110 cosponsors and was placed on the House calendar, it was not allowed to be brought to the floor for a vote. The purpose of this legislation was prevent future genocides by stressing the importance of remembering and learning the lessons of past crimes against humanity, including the Armenian Genocide, Holocaust, and the Cambodian and Rwandan genocides in hopes of preventing future atrocities. In addition, this resolution strengthened America's commitment to the universal values of the Genocide Convention and asked the United States to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the Genocide Convention.

As Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, it was an honor to be instrumental in preparing the report last year which gained unanimous approval at the committee level. The report described the Armenian genocide in the following terms: ''Beginning in 1915, the Islamic Turkish state of the Ottoman Empire sought to end the collective existence of the Christian Armenian population. From 1915 through 1918, during World War I, the Ottoman Empire subjected the Armenian people to deportation, expropriation, abduction, torture, massacre, and starvation. The atrocities were renewed between 1920 and 1923. It is estimated that one and a half million Armenians were killed out of over two million Armenians who had lived in the Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that these activities ceased with the institution of the new Republic of Turkey in October, 1923.'' Two weeks ago, I signed onto a bipartisan letter to President Bush, asking him to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian Genocide is fully documented in U.S. history. In a July 24, 1915 cable, American Consul Davis noted that, ''I do not believe there has ever been a massacre in the history of the world so general and thorough as that which is now being perpetrated in this region or that a more fiendish, diabolical scheme has ever been conceived by the mind of man. What the order is officially and nominally to exile the Armenians from these

Vilayets may mislead the outside world for a time, but the measure is nothing but a massacre of the most atrocious nature. It would be that even if all the people had allowed to perish on the road. As a greater part of them, however, have been actually murdered and as there is no doubt that this was done by order of the government, there can be no pretense that the measure is anything else but a general massacre.''

Now more than ever as the world is gripped by unrest and terrorism, the memory of the Genocide underscores our responsibility to help convey our cherished tradition of respect for fundamental human rights and opposition to mass slaughter. We owe it to the victims of the Genocide to acknowledge what happened and to teach our students and children about their suffering, so that we can fulfill our obligation to ensure that genocide will never happen again. Our future generation should be able to say, ''I learned, I acknowledge, and I will work to prevent it from happening again.''

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. This is both a somber and encouraging day for both myself and many of my constituents, who are survivors or ancestors of survivors. Somber in memory of the millions who lost their lives, and encouraging in the success of the Armenian American community of building new lives in the U.S., as well as an independent Armenia.

April 28, 1915 will live as a day of infamy in the lives of all Armenians, all over the world. It was this day that the Turkish government ordered the deportation of 2.5 million Armenians out of the Ottoman Empire. Within hours, Turkish forces had rounded up over 300 Armenian scholars, and deported or killed them. Over the next year, 1.5 million Armenians were killed or deported to concentration camps to await certain death.

I have always supported the Armenian American community. However, my support for the community does not only stem from the size of the Armenian Community in Queens, but also because I see the strategic importance of the Caucasus region for the United States.

In 2003, I had the opportunity to visit Armenia and to plant a tree at the Genocide memorial. The independent country of Armenia is a living testament to honor the memories of the survivors.

I believe that by failing to recognize these barbaric acts, one becomes complicit in them. Let us never forget the 1.5 million Armenians who perished in 1915 and 1916.

Mr. Speaker, again I commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and hope that April 28th, 1915 will never be forgotten. I also ask that the New York Times story focusing on survivors of the genocide be inserted into the RECORD. Their words and memories speak louder than any speech we will hear today.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 23, 2005]

ARMENIAN IMMIGRANTS RECALL A 90-YEAR-OLD TRAGEDY

(By Corey Kilgannon)

A cheery sign in the New York Armenian Home in Flushing, Queens, yesterday informed its elderly residents in colorful letters of the current date, season and weather.

And of an anniversary: ''Remember April 24, the Armenian Genocide.''

A framed proclamation by Gov. George E. Pataki hung nearby, declaring April 24 as Armenian Remembrance Day to commemorate the Turkish massacres of an estimated 1.5 million Armenians beginning in 1915. It called the killings ''the 20th century's first such calculated effort to destroy people on a massive scale'' and added that ''the Armenian Genocide led academics to coin and utilize the very term genocide.''

It is doubtful that even with failing memories, any residents at the home needed a reminder.

''This time of year, they all get disturbed and remember,'' said Jenny Akopyan, assistant director of the home.

Tomorrow, thousands of Armenian-Americans from across the Northeast are expected to gather in Times Square to mark the 90th anniversary of the murders of their relatives and forebears by Ottoman Turks during World War I.

On April 24, 1915, Turkish soldiers arrested hundreds of Armenian leaders in Constantinople, then tortured and executed them. The mass slaughter of Armenians over the next several years is often called the first genocide of that century and a precursor to the Holocaust.

The Armenian Home, on 45th Avenue in Flushing, opened in 1948 and has long housed many genocide survivors who escaped by playing dead, fleeing or other means. Most of the residents are from families decimated by the genocide, but only a half dozen—all in their 90's—actually escaped it as children.

The most recent death of a survivor was in August: Lucy Derderian, age 103, who ''only survived the genocide because her mother was smart enough to hide her under the dead bodies during a massacre,'' said Aghavni Ellian, the home's executive director.

Ms. Ellian walked into the home's day room, where about two dozen elderly Armenian immigrants sat watching ''The Price Is Right'' on a large television next to an ornate Christian shrine bedecked in crimson and gold. She carried a lamb dish that had been delivered for later: madal, a roast blessed by a priest and traditionally eaten on April 24.

The residents had just finished small cups of thick, strong Armenian coffee. Few survivors could offer completely lucid recollections, but each had some snippet of horror seared into memory.

Gulumya Erberber, 93, said that Turkish soldiers had beheaded her father, a wealthy academic, and seized his riches and several houses. She was 3 years old then, and her mother fled with the five children to a mountain village where the townspeople did not speak Armenian but did help the family.

Israel Arabian, 99, leaned on his cane and related how he was forced to work for a Turkish officer who took Mr. Arabian's teenage sister ''as a wife.'' He ran away and grew up in a Greek orphanage before eventually coming to New York and settling in Queens.

Many Armenians bitterly denounce the Turkish government for denying that the killings constituted genocide. In an interview yesterday, Tuluy Tanc, minister counselor for the Turkish Embassy in Washington, said the accusation of genocide was ''unfair and untrue,'' a legal ploy to gain reparations.

''We don't see what happened as genocide, quote-unquote,'' Mr. Tanc said. ''Unfortunate and tragic events took place during World War I and bad things happened to Armenians, and Muslims and Turks also.''

''The number killed is much less than they say—it's more like 300,000 Armenians who lost their lives,'' he said, adding that Turkish leaders had recently asked Armenia to set up a commission to study the killings.

Onorik Eminian, 93, said she was a young child living in the city of Izmir when the Turks killed her parents and other relatives. She said she has never stopped having nightmares about it, especially in April.

''I saw plenty, sir, plenty,'' she said. ''I saw them go in and they broke our churches. They took old ladies, old like me now, and shot them one by one. This I saw in front of my eyes. They chopped the arms off our schoolteachers and hung them from the trees in the street to teach us a lesson. We watched our priest come delivering food, and they killed him and threw the food into the street.''

''Are you sure you want to hear my sad story?'' she asked. ''I was playing in front of our house when they came on horses. My grandmother pulled me in. The Turks grabbed my father—he was hiding Armenians in his coffee shop—and I cried, 'Daddy, Daddy, don't go' and I held onto his leg. Then one soldier told me to shut up and hit me right here with a rifle. Look, I still got the mark.''

Weeping, she pointed to a bump on her forehead between her eyebrows and dabbed her eyes with a tissue.

''I said, 'Where's my father?' and they said, 'Here's your father,' and they held up his jacket and pants.''

She grew up in an orphanage, and eventually came to New York, lived in Astoria and had two daughters who never saw any mention of Armenian genocide in their history books.

''If you write this in the newspaper,'' she said, ''will the Turks come here and kill me? I'm still afraid of them.''

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in Commemoration of the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. This yearly commemoration is a testament to the lives and the legacy of the 1.5 million Armenians who lost their lives, and it underscores our commitment to keeping the Armenian nation and culture alive.

As we revisit this dark period in Armenian history, we must be mindful of the lessons that can be learned from this tragedy. Blind hatred and senseless prejudice tear at the very fabric of our society even today. The victims of the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, Rwanda, and Sudan, and acts of vicious terrorism remind us of the human cost of hate and implore us to prevent these tragedies from happening again.

I want to join my colleagues in renewing our pledge to the Armenian nation to ensure that Armenians around the world can live free of threats to their existence and prosperity. Azerbaijan continues to blockade Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, denying the Armenian people the food, medicine, and other humanitarian assistance they need to lead secure lives. A key component of this pledge is maintaining high levels of assistance to Armenia. As Ranking Member of the House Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, I will fight to maintain funding for Armenia, which recently became eligible for special Millennium Challenge Account funds.

We must also be cautious to balance our immediate foreign policy needs with the long-time concerns we have had about both the Azerbaijan and Turkish records. This includes reaffirming that the Section 907 waiver is not automatic and indefinite—it will be carefully evaluated. And it also involves close monitoring of assistance given to Turkey.

Building a strong, prosperous Armenia is the best way to honor the memory of the Genocide victims, and I am proud to be a partner in this effort.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the somber occasion of the

90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and to call upon the Administration to finally recognize this horrible crime for what it truly was, systematic and deliberate murder.

The Armenian Genocide began on April 24, 1915, and within 8 years one and a half million Armenians were tortured and killed. Tortures that the Armenians were forced to endure included forced labor, rape, kidnapping, and death marches under the guise of ''temporary relocation.'' A grave injustice was intentionally committed by the Ottoman Empire during these years, and it is imperative that we now stand up and demand that this injustice be officially recognized by Turkey, the United States, and the world.

The senseless crime of genocide is one of the most reprehensible acts that can be committed by man. To attempt eradication of an entire population based on a misguided prejudice is absolutely vile, and the United States should do everything in its power to try and prevent such atrocities from happening in the future. Only by explicitly defining genocide and ensuring that all cases of genocide throughout history are appropriately identified can we effectively deter this crime. Particularly at this time of heightened vigilance around the world, it is absolutely imperative that America take a strong stance against the most troubling of all terrorist acts, mass killings.

We can not forget Adolph Hitler's haunting remark to his military staff prior to launching the Holocaust: ''Who, after all, remembers the annihilation of the Armenians.'' Let us stand up as a country and let the world know that we do remember.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, last Sunday, April 24, 2005 marked the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Beginning in 1915, an estimated one and a half million Armenians were systematically murdered over the next eight years.

There were nearly two million Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire on the eve of W.W.I. In an organized campaign of ethnically motivated genocide, the Ottoman Turks deported a million Armenians, separating families and destroying livelihoods. Hundreds of thousands more were murdered. They did not lose their lives, as common nomenclature refers to the situation. They were murdered. Many others died of starvation, exhaustion, and epidemics which ravaged the concentration camps.

On this 90th Anniversary, I join with my colleagues in Congress and the Armenian community worldwide in commemorating this solemn day of remembrance. In particular I commend the Armenian-Americans from my district who departed from the All Saints Community Center in Glenview, IL, to join dozens of Armenians from the Chicago area to peacefully protest at the Turkish Consulate in Chicago. This sort of activism is an important step to finally gaining official recognition of the genocide.

This anniversary serves as a reminder of the horrible campaigns of genocide that occurred in the past, from the Holocaust, to Rwanda, to today's atrocities in Darfur, Sudan. We must uphold our duties as global defenders of human rights and give the Armenian community, as the victims of the 20th Century's first genocide, the recognition they deserve.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

This past Sunday, April 24th, marked 90 years since the beginning to one of history's dark chapters. On that day in 1915, the government of the Ottoman Empire began a brutal and systematic campaign of genocide against the Armenian people. It started with the execution of some 300 Armenian leaders, professionals and intellectuals. By 1923, over 1.5 million Armenians had been killed, and another 500,000 had been deported.

The Ottoman Empire claimed that it was acting to suppress civil unrest among Armenians during World War I. The absurdity of this justification for a reign of terror was pointed out at the time by no less credible a witness than our own Ambassador to the Empire, Henry Morganthau. His report to Washington described the Ottoman campaign as one of ''race extermination.''

The almost unimaginable pain and suffering endured by the Armenian people has been compounded since by the refusal of the Ottoman Empire and now the government of Turkey to acknowledge that the Genocide ever even occurred. Generations of Turks have been raised to deny this atrocity, perpetuating resentments and hostilities. By trying to defend the indefensible, the government of Turkey has denied the Armenian people, as well as its own people the chance to begin the process of healing these wounds.

Mr. Speaker, 90 years is far, far too long for a people to wait for an acknowledgment of the crimes committed against them. That is why I am proud to support the resolution that will be introduced in the coming days remembering the victims and honoring the survivors of the Armenian Genocide. This resolution will appropriately recognize these acts for what they were. Only with a common understanding of this dark period can we move forward and work to prevent similar tragedies in the future.

While we mark the loss and pain of the Armenian people every April 24th, it is my fervent hope that some day soon, it will no longer be necessary to urge the recognition of these terrible events as genocide. I am particularly disappointed that the President has once again failed to lead on this issue. Once again, President Bush's statement this weekend studiously avoided proper recognition of this tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all my colleagues take the time to reflect on this anniversary, and that we renew our commitment to the victims of the Armenian Genocide and to each other to never allow such human suffering to occur again.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923. We are familiar with these events. Hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children were driven from their homes, starved, beaten, and shot. Government-orchestrated intimidation, government-sponsored deportations, and government-perpetrated slaughter are the hallmarks of the Armenian Genocide. They are also the hallmarks of other genocides with which we are all too familiar.

The Armenian Genocide was the first genocide of its kind, but it was not the last. It has served as a model of the Holocaust in Europe, the Killing Fields of Cambodia, and religiously motivated atrocities in the Sudan. We look regretfully and sorrowfully at the slaughter of so many in these cases, as well we should. These events demonstrate man's inherent sinfulness and the evil that comes so easily. No one denies the events in Europe, Asia, and Africa happened. Anyone rejecting these mass slaughters is themselves rejected. And yet, many suffer some kind of incredulity when it comes to the Armenian Genocide. We demand the perpetrators of these other genocides are made to account for their actions, but not the Armenian Genocide.

Photographs and eye witness account point overwhelmingly and undoubtedly to the massacre of over one million human beings, but no one has ever been held accountable. Ninety years after these events, the perpetrators are no longer living. In this world, they can no longer be held responsible for their actions. Their heirs, however, should be made to acknowledge the deeds of their fathers. But they are not.

Modern Turkey has made Armenian Genocide denial into an article of faith. Genocide denial is taught in schools, and is supported by the government. Anyone who deviates from the official line is considered a traitor. Indeed, the government of Turkey works feverishly to prevent any government from recognizing the Armenian Genocide. Recognition by the legislative bodies of France, Italy, Switzerland, and Russia has been met with harsh criticism from the Turkish government.

In 2000, only intense lobbying and ruthless pressure from Turkey prevented this House from recognizing the Armenian Genocide. It is shameful that the United States House of Representatives refuses to reaffirm the Armenian Genocide. Official American records on the Armenian Genocide are considered to be the most extensive in the world, and yet we refuse to reaffirm what already has been acknowledged to be the first genocide of the Twentieth Century. In past eras, American officials, including U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau and President Ronald Reagan, boldly declared the savage butchery in eastern Anatolia and the Caucuses to be genocide.

By allowing Turkey to deny its past actions, we take a step backwards. By not reaffirming the events of 90 years ago, we do not live up to the ideals of our country. I reaffirm the Armenian Genocide in the House of Representatives. I know that it happened. I remember.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Today we solemnly remember the victims of the Ottoman Government's 8-year campaign of terror against its Armenian population. During this brutal campaign, Armenian communities were systematically destroyed, one and a half million innocent men, women, and children were murdered, and over one million others were forcibly deported.

This somber anniversary is a tribute to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, and a painful reminder that the world's inaction and denial 90 years ago left a tragic precedent for other acts of senseless bloodshed. This year we marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. The road from Armenia to Auschwitz was direct. If more attention had been centered on the slaughter of innocent Armenians, perhaps the events of the Holocaust might never have been allowed to occur.

And, as we speak today, government-supported Janjaweed militias continue their systematic destruction of black Sudanese in Darfur. Thousands have been murdered,

raped, and starved to death, and over one million have been displaced from their homes. The Armenian Genocide stands as a tragic precedent to the brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing currently ravaging Darfur.

Today, we honor the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, and vow once more that genocide will not go unnoticed or unmourned. We must stand up to governments that persecute their own people, and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to fight all crimes against humanity and the efforts to hide them from the rest of the world.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the anniversary of a tragic event. April 24th 2005 marks a solemn occasion in world history: the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. From 1915 to 1923, the Christian Armenian population endured a policy of systemic killing implemented by the then-Ottoman and early Turkish Empires, resulting in the ethnic slaughter of one and a half million Armenians.

Since that time, descendants of Armenian immigrants have proudly clung to their identity, prospering in communities throughout the world. Here in the United States, we are especially fortunate to have a vibrant Armenian community that has greatly enriched American civic life.

It is vital that we remember this dark period in history. Losing the memory of this tragic event would only perpetuate the injustice. For too long, the Armenian Genocide, the first genocide of the 20th Century, has been denied the recognition that it properly deserves. As human beings, we all have a responsibility to keep events such as the Armenian Genocide at the forefront of our collective historical memory. We cannot begin to overcome the challenges of the future until we acknowledge our past mistakes.

It is perhaps the tragedy of the 20th Century that a cataclysmic occurrence such as the Armenian Genocide has to share a place in our memory with other horrific events such as the wartime atrocities perpetuated during WWII, the ethnic cleansings in Cambodia and Bosnia, and the Rwandan genocide. I truly believe we must take the time and make the effort to find reconciliation between the perpetrator and victims of these events.

Currently, we are confronted by a genocide unfolding in Sudan, where tens of thousands die every month; we must not allow ourselves to turn a blind eye.

Mr. Speaker, recognizing the Armenian Genocide will help heal the wounds humanity has suffered in the past century. By acknowledging the horrors of our past and working to protect our future, we take one step closer to the goal of ''never again.''

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, ''those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.'' That saying is as true today as it was almost a hundred years ago when the philosopher George Santayana first wrote it.

So, today we are here to remember. We are here to remember that the Ottoman Empire brutally tortured and murdered 1.5 million Armenians 90 years ago and that half a million Armenians were forced to flee their country. Let us also remember and honor those who survived the genocide. Although few survivors of the Armenian Genocide are still living today, those who endured the horrors of 1915 are heroes for all time.

We are here to honor those who died and to call for recognition of the Genocide carried about by the Ottoman Turkish government. We are here to remember so we don't repeat the same mistake, anywhere, in any country of the world.

In my view, all Americans must recognize that the atrocities committed from 1915 to 1923 constitute genocide. We do not use that word lightly. But the word, itself, makes a powerful statement about the horrors suffered by the Armenian people. As Samantha Powers, the leading expert on genocide said in a letter to the editor of the New York Times, ''The extermination of Armenians is recognized as genocide by the consensus of scholars of genocide and Holocaust worldwide. The failure to acknowledge this trivializes a human rights crime of enormous magnitude.'' Today, the people of Armenia and her diaspora are proudly seeking to rebuild their country.

From the ashes of despair born of the genocide, and from the ravages of seven decades of communist rule, Armenians the world over are striving to secure a safe and prosperous future for Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh.

As Armenian-Americans join with Armenians from throughout the world to help to rebuild their homeland, and as they seek to secure an economically prosperous state founded on firm democratic principles, I will stand by them.

As a Member of the House leadership and the House International Relations Committee, I promise to do all I can on behalf of Armenia and to ensure that the Armenian genocide is recognized. In closing, I remind you that Adolf Hitler once stated: ''Who today remembers the Armenians?''

I am here to say that we remember the Armenians. The children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of the survivors and of those who perished, remember the Armenians. The friends and neighbors of Armenia, remember the Armenians. And here in the United States, we remember the Armenians.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand here today with my colleagues to acknowledge this important event and to have the opportunity to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide; one of the saddest chapters of history. We join the Armenian-Americans across the nation and the Armenian community abroad to mourn the loss of so many innocent lives.

In this turbulent century, we have witnessed humanity's great potential for good and bad—but the world has triumphed more often in the last 90 years than it has disappointed. And yet, while focusing on humanity's successes is always more attractive than remembering any failures, we as civilized peoples, countries and nations must not deny the immorality of atrocities such as the Armenian Genocide.

The U.S. is fortunate to be home to an organized and active Armenian community, whose members contribute and participate in every aspect of civic life. This is one of the reasons that myself—along with 170 members of Congress—have asked President Bush to join us in reaffirming the United States record on the Armenian Genocide.

As a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues and an ardent supporter of Fresno's Armenian-American community, I wish the people of Armenia success in their efforts to bring about the lasting peace and prosperity that they deserve. I pledge to continue my ongoing efforts to sponsor initiatives that would build on our record towards an inevitable, full and irrevocable U.S. affirmation of the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today we mark the 90th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. Every year we participate in this solemn commemoration but this year it has a special significance.

For the families of the victims and the survivors, the horrors of that bygone era remain so painful that it is hard to believe how much time has passed. The passage of years has not dimmed the memory or eased the grief. Not a relative or friend has been forgotten, nor have fond memories of native cities faded away.

Moreover, no accounting for mass murder has been made. Though many governments and legislative bodies around the world have recognized the Armenian Genocide, the Turkish Government consistently refuses to acknowledge what happened. For Armenians everywhere, Turkey's policy of aggressive denial sharpens the feeling of loss, embittering the lives of those who miraculously survived.

Today, those of us without Armenian blood share the sorrow of Armenians everywhere. I had the privilege in September 2000 of chairing hearings on the Armenian Genocide in the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights of the International Relations Committee. The reading I have done over the years, which has included detailed descriptions of the atrocities, shock me. But, I am resolved to speak about this issue, loudly and often.

The Armenian Genocide has significance for all of us. It created a monstrous precedent which launched a century of genocides. In numerous countries and cultures, an ethnic group that controlled the state has used its instruments of coercion to slaughter members of a minority group, religion or class. It is enough to recall Adolf Hitler's smug remark, ''Who remembers the Armenians?'' to grasp the universality of what happened to the Armenians.

Much has changed in the world since the mass, planned murder in 1915—two world wars, the fall of the Ottoman, Habsburg and Romanov Empires, the rise of the American superpower and most recently, the fall of the Soviet Union. One would have thought that we would have grown wiser over the years. Alas, we have not learned the appropriate lessons from the 20th century's first genocide. Just a few years after Rwanda, at this very moment, another genocide is taking place in Darfur. Yet, instead of mounting a united response, the international community has waffled or slithered away from responsibility, as hundreds of thousands are slaughtered.

The record of man's inhumanity to man is awful enough to produce a feeling of resignation. But we must fight that tendency. We must continue to remind the world of what occurred in 1915 and keep calling on Turkey to won up. We must not restrain ourselves from speaking of the Armenian Genocide. Along with many of my colleagues, I urge President Bush to speak the truth to Ankara, which needs to come to terms with its own past.

As this somber time, I want to note one optimistic point: OSCE negotiators are guardedly hopeful about the prospects of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. True, we have experienced such moments before and should not get our hopes up. Still, I am encouraged to hear that there is at least some reason for hope. We all pray for a peaceful solution to this conflict, which has caused over 30,000 deaths and many more casualties. Next year,

when we once again commemorate the Genocide of the Armenians, I hope their descendants will be living in peace with their neighbors, building a democratic, prosperous country that will be a light unto the world.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. On the night of April 24, 1915, the Ottoman Empire arrested over 200 Armenian community leaders in Constantinople, thereby marking only the beginning of the horrendous Armenian Genocide to come.

On the eve of World War I, an estimated two million Armenians lived in the Ottoman Empire. Well over a million were deported and hundreds of thousands were simply killed. Between 1915 and 1918, the Ottoman Empire conducted other atrocities against Armenians which also included abduction, torture, massacre and starvation. Armenians living in Armenia and Anatolia were forcibly moved to Syria, where they were left in the desert to die of hunger and thirst. In addition, there were systematic murders; women and children were abducted from their homes and abused. It has been estimated that one and half million Armenians died as a result of this genocide from 1915 to 1923. By 1923 the entire landmass of Asia Minor and historic West Armenia had been expunged of its Armenian population.

On this important anniversary, it is a lasting lesson to people everywhere that genocide must not only be opposed by all nations, but that it must be universally recognized as a crime against humanity—no matter where it occurs or against whom it is carried out.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, during which one and a half million Armenians were tortured and murdered, and more than half a million were forced from their homeland into exile. Despite overwhelming documentation, the Turkish government has refused to admit or apologize for these atrocious acts, or even acknowledge the Armenian Genocide.

As Americans, we must guarantee that our foreign policy reflects our values of justice, equality and responsibility. These values should apply in all of our international interactions, including those with Turkey, a NATO ally. Turkey wishes to increase its global profile through accession to organizations such as the European Union. However, if Turkey wishes to gain the world's respect, it must earn it. It must demonstrate its commitment to peace and democracy in the region. It must reopen its borders, end its blockade of Armenia, and encourage Azerbaijan to end its aggressive rhetoric. And most importantly, it must accept responsibility for past injustices through an unconditional recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Only then can Turkey begin to come to terms with its history. Only then can Armenians seek justice from the Turkish government for the losses of so much and so many.

Last month, I was honored to lead a conference session for Rhode Island students in which we discussed the genocide and what steps our government should take to recognize that tragedy appropriately. I think practically every student present that morning was amazed that, despite overwhelming evidence and widespread support, Congress has not yet passed the genocide resolution. It is time for Congress and the White House to speak with one voice and ensure that our national ideals are reflected in our foreign policy. Consequently, I joined many of my colleagues in asking the President to recognize the Armenian Genocide in unambiguous terms, and I will again cosponsor the Genocide Resolution when it is reintroduced in the coming weeks.

As an ardent supporter of Rhode Island's Armenian-American community throughout my public service career, I am proud to join my colleagues to today in honoring the victims of the genocide by paying tribute to their memory, showing compassion for those who have suffered from such prejudice, and never forgetting the pain that they have endured.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, for the past nine years, I have come to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to honor and remember the genocide perpetrated against the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th Century.

This year marks the 90th Anniversary of these heinous acts, which drove so many survivors to the distant shores of the United States. Those of us in central Massachusetts have learned the story of the Armenian Genocide from our friends, neighbors and colleagues who are direct survivors, or the children and grandchildren of those survivors.

I have been privileged to participate in many of the annual remembrances of the Armenian Genocide held in Worcester, Massachusetts, at the Armenian Church of Our Savior, one of the oldest Armenian churches and congregations in America.

But I feel more privileged to have worked with the Armenian community in Worcester to educate the community, and especially young people and college students, about not only the Armenian Genocide, but about other contemporary and even current genocides that are taking place around the world. I am especially grateful that I will be able to collaborate with them in the future on events that will focus on the genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

May we all live to see and celebrate the day when we commemorate the Armenian Genocide in a world where genocides no longer take place against any people.

□ 1945

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order on the Armenian genocide.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCAUL of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

HONORING ATHENS, TEXAS, MAYOR JERRY KING

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the exceptional leadership, character, and outstanding achievements of my dear friend, Mayor Jerry King of Athens, Texas. After an unprecedented five terms in office and 10 years of exceptional service, Mayor King has decided to step down as mayor. His decision is truly a loss to the citizens of Athens, Texas.

A responsive and fiscally responsible leader, Jerry King has always brought Athens together to achieve many worthy goals, including the opening of a new city hall that is modern and meeting the needs of the citizens of that community and the Texas Freshwater Fishery Center, which is truly a wonderful showplace facility for Athens and east Texas that helps educate numerous tourists and school children on the wonders of nature and the environment and our freshwater fish.

He has helped revitalize downtown Athens, Texas. Mr. Speaker, at a time when many small towns in rural America and rural Texas have seen a decline, they have seen their glory days pass them up, downtown Athens is vibrant, it is alive, it is well, thanks to the leadership of Jerry King. It shows that Athens' glory days are in the present and in the future, not in the past.

Mayor King has also worked to improve Athens' transportation infrastructure through the new loop that is just vital to economic development in that part of east Texas. Mayor King has led and won the support on so many different programs and projects that are important to the people of Athens. This is truly a record of accomplishment.

Undoubtedly because of it, Mayor King is recognized as a strong and visionary leader throughout all of east Texas; and elected officials throughout East Texas, including myself, have sought his advice, his counsel, his wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, he is upbeat, he is optimistic, he is forward thinking and he is a good listener; and through his efforts he has made Athens, Texas, a better place to live, to learn, to work, and to raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, Jerry King has not only demonstrated his dedication to public service through his tenure as mayor but through his volunteer service and enthusiastic involvement in community organizations as well. Jerry has always led by example. He served as the president of the Henderson County YMCA, the president of the Athens Noon Kiwanis Club, the president of the Athens Teenage Baseball Association, the vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, a board member of the Athens Industrial Foundation, and the list goes on and on and on.

In his professional career, Jerry King has undertaken a noble life, that of educator. His life is one about improving education and strengthening our institutions of higher learning.

After graduating from Commerce High School, Jerry King attended Texas A&M University at Commerce, where he received a bachelor's degree in economics, a master's degree in business administration, and a doctorate in education.

He has put his education to work for the citizens of east Texas as a professor of management, business and economics at his beloved Trinity Valley Community College. Today he serves there as Dean of Occupational Instruction; and thanks to his work, young people from all over east Texas have been enlightened about business and economics, and thusly they have been empowered. They have been empowered by a great teacher that they respect and admire to go out and create the next generation of inventory software, to help found the next community bank next door.

As the Congressman for the Fifth Congressional District of Texas, I am pleased today to recognize my good friend Jerry King for his many years of public service as mayor and for the outstanding contributions he has made to the city of Athens. I also want to thank his wonderful and patient wife, Dosha, for the sacrifice she too has made on behalf of the people of Athens.

Although he is stepping down as mayor, Jerry King has truly made his community and country a better place. I know he will continue to do so, be it as public servant, leader, volunteer, or educator.

Mr. Speaker, the greatest compliment I can pay my friend Jerry King tonight is that when I think about my 19-month-old son, Travis, I can be proud if one day he would grow up to be just like Mayor Jerry King of Athens, Texas.

NO TO THE CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last week more than 150 Republicans and Democrats, Senators and House Members, business groups and labor organizations gathered on Capitol Hill to speak out against the Central American Free Trade Agreement. This group of unlikely bedfellows, if you will, spoke with one voice to deliver a unified message, no to CAFTA.

CAFTA, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, expands the failed trade policies of the North American Free Trade Agreement to Central America. When I ran for Congress in 1992, the United States had a $38 billion trade deficit. Last year, a dozen years later, the United States had a $618 billion trade deficit: from $38 billion to $618 billion trade deficit.

The more you look at the face of CAFTA, the better you can see who will benefit and who will pay the price if Congress passes one more trade agreement. Trade pacts like NAFTA and CAFTA enable companies to go overseas, exploit cheap labor in the developing world, and then import their products back into the United States. That is why we have a $618 billion trade deficit.

The Central American Free Trade Agreement should actually be called the Central American Free Labor Agreement.

Now, we know in the United States our economy over the last several decades has been a tremendous success because workers share in the wealth they create. If you work for General Motors, if you work for a hardware store, you help your employer by your labor make money, and your employer in turn allows you to share in the wealth you create. That is why the American economy is such a success story.

But throughout the developing world, workers simply do not share in the wealth they create. Workers in Costa Rica cannot afford to buy the toys they make for Disney for their children. Workers in Vietnam at a Nike plant cannot afford to buy the shoes they make. Motorola workers in Malaysia cannot afford to buy the cell phones they make. Ford and GM workers in Mexico cannot afford to buy the cars they manufacture.

The Central American Free Labor Agreement is about access to cheap labor. The numbers do not lie. The combined purchasing power of the CAFTA nations, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, the combined purchasing power of those six countries is equal to that of Columbus, Ohio, or Orlando, Florida, or Memphis, Tennessee, or the entire State of Kansas.

CAFTA supporters attempt to argue that this trade agreement will open markets for U.S. exports. They paint a picture of American workers manufacturing products for this hugely growing consumer market in Central America. But the math does not lie. The average salary of a Nicaraguan worker is $2,300 a year, $191 a month. Nicaraguan workers cannot afford to buy a car made in Ohio. They cannot afford to buy shoes made in Maine. They cannot afford to buy textiles or apparel made in North Carolina or Georgia. They cannot afford to buy software made in Seattle in the district of the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT).

The fact is, I ask CAFTA supporters, what American-made product can a Central American worker purchase who is earning less than $200 a month? CAFTA supporters will not answer these questions. They cannot.

The truth is that CAFTA is not about selling them American products. CAFTA is about exploiting foreign workers, about taking American jobs to Central America. It is about exploiting those foreign workers, and it means fewer jobs here.

NAFTA promised job growth in the U.S. and a thriving middle class in Mexico; but 10 years later our Nation has lost 1 million jobs, and Mexican workers' wages have remained stagnant.

CAFTA, the dysfunctional cousin of NAFTA, is more of the same: another trade agreement that ships jobs overseas, another trade agreement that neglects the essential environmental standards, another trade agreement that weakens food safety standards in both countries, another trade agreement that keeps foreign workers in poverty.

The definition of madness, Mr. Speaker, is repeating the same action over and over again and expecting a different result. That is what happened: 12 years of trade agreements, 12 years of promises, 12 years of failed trade policy. Yet the insanity of it is we keep doing the same thing. We keep passing more trade agreements.

CAFTA simply does not make sense. The President signed CAFTA almost 1 year ago. Since 2001, typically when the President signs an agreement, we vote on it within 60 days. This week, on Thursday, will be the 11-month anniversary of the signing of CAFTA. House leaders said they are going to vote on it by the end of May.

Mr. Speaker, I would close by saying when the world's poorest workers can buy American products, rather than make them, then we will know that our trade policies are finally succeeding. CAFTA will not. Vote ''no'' on CAFTA.

IN SUPPORT OF LT. ILARIO PANTANO

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 of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is the Article 32 hearing for Second Lieutenant Ilario Pantano, a Marine who I have talked about at great length and who has served our Nation bravely in both gulf wars.

In an action of self-defense a year ago in Iraq, Lt. Pantano made a split-second, battlefield decision to shoot two Iraqi insurgents who refused to follow his orders to stop their movement towards him. Two-and-a-half months later, a sergeant under his command who never even saw the shooting and who was earlier demoted for his lack of leadership abilities, accused him of murder. Because of that, Lt. Pantano today faces an Article 32 hearing where a hearing officer will determine whether he will face a court marshal for two counts of premeditated murder.

Mr. Speaker, what is happening to this young man is unfair and an injustice. Lt. Pantano has served this Nation with great honor. My personal experiences with him and his family convince me that he is a dedicated family man who loves his corps and his country.

Mona Charen, a well-known journalist, puts it best when she writes: ''Pantano was in the middle of a war zone, not a vacation on the Riviera. He had been dodging ambushes and booby traps for weeks. He had seen his comrades killed and maimed. Perhaps he acted too hastily in shooting those Iraqis. But a murder charge? Has the

Marine Corps gone PC,'' politically correct?

I have received letters and e-mails from Vietnam veterans who sympathize with him and ask that I do something to help him. They know what it is like to be in a battle with an unconventional enemy. One second can make the difference between life and death.

I have also read excerpts from his combat fitness report in which superiors praise his leadership and talent and even call for his promotion.

Mr. Speaker, Lt. Pantano was by all accounts an exceptional Marine. I hope that in the next day or two, as these hearings end, the hearing officer comes to the same conclusion that I and many like myself have come to, that Lt. Pantano should never have been charged in the first place and that all charges against him are dropped.

Mr. Speaker, I put in a resolution, H. Res. 167, to support Lt. Pantano as he faces trial. I hope that my colleagues in the House will take some time to read my resolution and look into this situation for themselves. But, most of all, I hope it is not necessary for us to discuss this further after this week.

I close with another quote from Mona Charen that I believe summarizes this situation: ''Obviously, the United States cannot turn a blind eye to war crimes. If a soldier lines up civilians in front of a pit, My Lai style, and massacres them, he would richly deserve, and every self-respecting American would demand, a court marshal. But good Lord, by what possible standards can this be called murder?''

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I ask God to please bless Lt. Pantano and his family, and I ask the good Lord to please bless all of our men and women in uniform.

I close by asking God to please continue to bless America.

SOLVING AMERICA'S ENERGY 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. Mr. Speaker, President Bush invited the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Prince Abdullah, to his ranch in Crawford, Texas, and met with him yesterday. Here is a photo that has been on the White House Web site and in many newspapers around the country showing the President and the Prince holding hands. That is a sign of friendship over there in that part of the world.

□ 2000

But I was struck by the fact that the focus, of course, was the subject of oil.

As we watch what the President said, or at least what was reported, our President is in a position of begging. America begging. America begging a dictatorship to ease up on oil prices.

My colleagues might recall the President asked the Saudi prince to take it easy before the election in November, kind of keep prices down a bit, but since the election, they have just skyrocketed. In California, people are paying over $3 a gallon. In Ohio I can tell my colleagues I have paid $2.50, $2.57. The average price they tell us is about $2.24 nationally, with a 43 percent increase since a year ago, and crude oil prices were up Monday about $54 a barrel, up $37 from a year ago.

Now, the United States consumes about $7.1 billion worth of petroleum, and two-thirds of it is being imported, Saudi Arabia being the largest supplier. In essence, America is totally dependent. People have to understand this, because until the American people really understand this, we will not change. Every time we buy a tankful of gas, two-thirds of the money we spend goes somewhere else, and it goes to places that are undemocratic.

The New York Times reports today, and it has this picture in the paper, about the President's meeting, and it also has an article about Venezuela, which I will submit to the RECORD. Venezuela provides about 15 percent of the oil that we consume. In fact, I have a chart here that shows from the Middle East where we get about 30 percent of the total supply, with Saudi Arabia being the largest supplier, along with Kuwait, Iraq, United Arab Emirates, and then Venezuela about 15 percent; nearly half of what we consume comes from those regions of the world. America has to understand this, because until the people of the United States understand, this place will not change.

If we look at the sad energy bill that passed this Chamber last week, without my support, it lives in the past. It lives in the 20th century, not the 21st century. There is a theory: If you just put more holes in the ground, all problems will be solved. Well, that is not going to happen. We have to think in a different way.

Now, Venezuela, as the article in The New York Times today confirms, has become a bit antagonistic toward the United States because we have an administration who is trying to get rid of the President of that country's government. Now, whether you like Venezuela or not, the facts are we get 15 percent of our oil from there, and without that 15 percent, we have to get it from somewhere else, and the prices are going to go up. Now, the President of Venezuela believes that the United States is planning an invasion of his country, and he has threatened to cut these oil sales. It is not a very pretty picture when we look around the world, whether you look at Colombia, Nigeria, Venezuela, the Middle East. So it is not surprising that the President is holding hands with the prince.

What is truly dangerous and tragic about this trend is America is not independent. We had a Declaration of Independence at the beginning of the Republic to cut our umbilical cord to Britain for political and economic reasons. But imagine an America that was energy independent; again, where we put all of this money, that is making others rich, in the pockets of producers in this country, starting with the farmers of America who today, within 5 years, could displace 25 percent of our imported petroleum with the use of clean, burning biofuels based in biomass, in ethanol, in biodiesel, soy diesel, fuels that we can produce today on the fields that are lying fallow across this country. Imagine what biogenetics can do to produce greater BTUs per ton of what we can produce. We do not need a new hydrogen age right now; we can use what we have today to displace these purchases. We are not doing it.

Imagine, imagine an America that was energy independent; again, where when you went to the gas pump, you enriched your own community, the farmers that live around the communities that you live in, and that the gas pump that you drove up to, you could buy ethanol at E85, or you could buy 100 percent soy diesel. Do my colleagues know, in Ohio you cannot do that. Minnesota has seen the future, Iowa has seen the future. There are some places in this country who have seen the future, but the majority of our people have not seen the future.

Renewable biofuels, domestically produced, could directly displace imported petroleum, and our energy bill last week should have done that. Some of us want to live in the 21st and 22nd century; we do not want our President to be holding hands with the crown prince and begging.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 26, 2005]

BUSH AND SAUDI PRINCE DISCUSS HIGH OIL PRICES IN RANCH MEETING

(By Richard W. Stevenson)

CRAWFORD, TX, April 25.—President Bush discussed the surge in oil prices with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia on Monday, but focused on a plan by the Saudis to increase their oil-pumping capacity over the next decade rather than on any short-term efforts to bring prices down.

The two leaders talked for three hours here at Mr. Bush's ranch, trying to restore some normality to a relationship that has been tense since the emergence of the role of terrorists from Saudi Arabia in the Sept. 11 attacks. They discussed a variety of issues, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, terrorism, trade and Mr. Bush's call for more democracy in the Middle East, and the men made every effort to portray the relationship as back on track.

Mr. Bush even held the crown prince's hand, a traditional Saudi sign of friendship, as he guided Abdullah up the steps through a bed of bluebonnets to his office, the very picture of Saudi-American interdependence.

But the focus was on oil prices. Officials from both sides emerged from the meeting to say there was agreement on the value of Saudi Arabia's signaling to global markets that it would push down prices over the long run as demand for energy increased. American officials said they hoped the Saudi policy might put immediate downward pressure on oil prices, even though the expansion plan has been public for weeks.

''A high oil price will damage markets, and he knows that,'' Mr. Bush said as he waited for his guest to arrive.

Officials said there was no explicit request by Mr. Bush for short-term steps to bring

down rising oil and gasoline prices, which are threatening to take a toll on the economy in the United States and are already pulling down the president's approval ratings. They said that Mr. Bush and other officials had already signaled to the Saudis that they wanted a commitment to pump more oil in the short run, and that last week the Saudi oil minister had publicly expressed a willingness to do so.

The officials said the Saudis used the meeting to detail for Mr. Bush the steps they intended to take to cushion the global market from future increases in demand from fast-growing economies like China and India, and from the United States and other industrial nations.

Saudi Arabia's plan, which it began discussing publicly weeks ago, calls for spending up to $50 billion to increase its maximum sustainable production capacity to 12.5 million barrels a day by 2009, and to 15 million in the subsequent decade, from about 10.8 million barrels now. The Saudis are currently pumping about 9.5 million barrels a day.

Asked whether that plan would have any effect soon on gasoline prices in the United States, Stephen J. Hadley, Mr. Bush's national security adviser, told reporters, ''It's hard to say.''

Mr. Hadley added that increasing capacity ''can't help but have a positive downward effect on prices and deal with some of the volatility in the market by assuring people that supply will be available as the economies grow.''

A Saudi official said that Mr. Bush had not requested a short-term production increase and that such an increase would not have any effect on gasoline prices in the United States in any case. The high price of gasoline in the United States, the Saudi official said, was mostly a result of a lack of refining capacity here.

''It will not make a difference if Saudi Arabia ships an extra million or two million barrels of crude oil to the United States,'' said the official, Adel al-Jubeir, a senior adviser to the crown prince. ''If you cannot refine it, it will not turn into gasoline, and that will not turn into lower prices.''

The national average price for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline last week was just under $2.24, up 43 cents from a year earlier. Crude oil prices on Monday were about $54 a barrel, up from $37 a year ago.

Saudi Arabia's plans to increase production capacity are politically and geologically sensitive. In the Middle East, the Saudis have been criticized for increasing production to help the United States; the most extreme of those critics has been Osama bin Laden.

Some experts, including past and present officials of Saudi Aramco, the state-owned oil company, have said the plan may be too optimistic because of geological complexities in the oil fields and challenges in finding enough technology and labor.

The crown prince arrived at the Bush ranch late Monday morning from Dallas, where he had met Sunday with Vice President Dick Cheney, who was briefed on the Saudi production plan. Reflecting the importance of the meeting to the administration, Mr. Bush was joined for the meeting here by Mr. Cheney; Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Mr. Hadley; Andrew H. Card Jr., the White House chief of staff; and Fran Townsend, the White House's homeland security adviser.

The atmosphere was considerably less tense than during Abdullah's last visit, three years ago to the day, and the two sides cited progress on a variety of fronts.

Saudi officials said only technicalities remained in negotiating a trade deal with the United States, a big step toward Saudi Arabia's goal of joining the World Trade Organization. The two governments agreed to work toward making it easier for Saudi students and military officers to study and train in the United States.

Mr. Hadley said the Saudis had made ''real good progress'' in fighting terrorism.

Ms. Rice said that the Saudis and the United States had a ''common agenda'' when it came to promoting peace between the Israelis and Palestinians and that she had discussed with Abdullah the need for the Saudis to provide financial support for the Palestinians in Gaza once the Israelis pull out this summer.

[From the New York Times, Apr. 26, 2005]

U.S. CONSIDERS TOUGHENING STANCE TOWARD VENEZUELA

(By Juan Forero)

As President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela veers toward greater confrontation with Washington, the Bush administration is weighing a tougher approach, including funneling more money to foundations and business and political groups opposed to his leftist government, American officials say.

The Bush administration has already begun to urge Venezuela's neighbors to distance themselves from Mr. Chávez and to raise concerns about press freedoms, judicial independence and the Venezuelan government's affinity for leftist groups abroad, including Colombian guerrillas.

But it has found no allies so far in its attempts to isolate the Venezuelan leader, and it has grown more and more frustrated by Mr. Chávez's strident anti-American outbursts and policies that seem intended to fly in the face of Washington. On Sunday, Mr. Chávez ended a 35-year military cooperation agreement and ordered out four American military instructors he accused of fomenting unrest.

The accusation, which American officials denied, was the latest blow to relations that had been bitter since the United States tacitly supported a coup that briefly ousted Mr. Chávez in April 2002. Since then his strength has grown. He won a recall election last August, and record high oil prices have left his government flush with money as it provides 15 percent of American oil imports.

American officials, who had chosen to ignore Mr. Chávez through much of last year, now recognize the need for a longer-term strategy to deal with a leader who is poised to win a second six-year term in elections next year.

A multiagency task force in Washington has been working on shaping a new approach, one that high-ranking American policy makers say would most likely veer toward a harder line. United States support for groups that Chávez supporters say oppose the government has been a source of tension in the past. Under the plans being considered, American officials said, that support may increase.

''The conclusion that is increasingly being drawn in Washington is that a realistic, pragmatic relationship, in which we can agree to disagree on some issues but make progress on others, does not seem to be in the cards,'' said an American official who helps guide policy in Latin America.

The official added, ''We offered them a more pragmatic relationship, but obviously if they do not want it, we can move to a more confrontational approach.''

Already counternarcotics programs have suffered, American officials noted, and meetings among high-ranking officials from the two countries are minimal.

''What's happening here is they realize this thing is deteriorating rapidly and it's going to require some more attention,'' said a high-ranking Republican aide on Capitol Hill who works on Latin America policy. ''The current look-the-other-way policy is not working.''

The United States, he said, is particularly concerned because Venezuela is one of four top providers of foreign oil to the United States. ''You can't write him off,'' the aide said of Mr. Chávez. ''He's sitting on an energy source that's critical to us.''

A main problem for the United States is that Washington has little, if any, influence over Caracas. The high price of oil has left Venezuela with no need for the loans or other aid that the United States could use as leverage.

Nor does the Bush administration have much support in Latin America, where left-leaning leaders now govern two-thirds of the continent. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is expected to raise concerns about Venezuela in a four-country tour through the region this week. Political analysts say she will have a hard time finding support.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, on a recent trip to Brazil, publicly raised concerns about Mr. Chávez. Days later, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil, in a meeting in Venezuela with Mr. Chávez and the leaders of Colombia and Argentina, pointedly said, ''We don't accept defamation and insinuations against a compañero,'' meaning a close friend.

''Venezuela has the right to be a sovereign country, to make its own decisions,'' he added.

For his part, Mr. Chávez, who is famous for his rambling, often outrageous speeches, has grown more belligerent, using his anti-American posturing to bolster his popular support. He has accused the United States of planning an invasion, prompting a threat to cut oil sales, and has hurled sexually tinged insults at Secretary Rice.

While other Venezuelan officials stress that oil sales to the United States would never cease, Venezuela's new energy ties with China have worried Washington, as did Mr. Chávez's recent meeting with President Mohammad Khatami of Iran, which he declared ''has every right'' to develop its atomic energy program.

Mr. Chávez is also forming a popular militia that he says will eventually have two million members and has plans to buy 100,000 AK–47 assault rifles from Russia and fighter jets from Brazil.

''All governments recognize the democratic character of the Venezuelan government, its peaceful vocation, and they want to establish relations with Venezuela, with just one exception, the United States,'' Alí Rodríguez, the Venezuelan foreign minister, said in an interview. ''It has gone to great lengths to isolate Venezuela, but no government is playing along. It has failed, and that's because there is no reason to isolate Venezuela.''

Indeed, many of Latin America's largest countries see little benefit in colliding with Mr. Chávez, nor do they support the isolation of Cuba. Venezuela provides oil at below-market prices and has numerous lucrative economic agreements with dozens of nations. Many also do not want to antagonize their own leftist constituencies, who are partial to Mr. Chávez.

''The other countries don't want to be drawn into a polemic between Venezuela and the United States,'' said Jennifer L. McCoy, a Venezuela expert at Georgia State University who headed the Carter Center's election observer mission in Caracas last year. ''It's a counterproductive strategy that could result in a negative Latin American reaction if they're forced to take sides.''

Many influential Democrats in Congress also oppose a more aggressive approach.

''I think it creates further estrangement,'' said Representative Bill Delahunt, a Massachusetts Democrat and a member of the House International Relations Committee who has met many times with Mr. Chávez. ''One cannot get around the fact that Hugo Chávez is a democratically elected president.''

But Bush administration policy planners say that efforts to patch up relations with Venezuela have largely failed.

The American ambassador, William Brownfield, who took over in Caracas in September, spent fruitless months before getting a meeting with Mr. Rodríguez. Requests for meetings with other ministers and even midlevel officials are routinely ignored, and Venezuela has canceled dozens of routine exchange programs with the United States.

The one option that administration officials increasingly believe they have is to respond much more assertively and publicly to Venezuelan policies the United States does not like, ideally with the help of other countries and respected institutions like the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

''We shouldn't be afraid to say when he's taking away liberties, not at all,'' Robert B. Zoellick, now the deputy secretary of state, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in February.

Venezuelan Foreign Ministry officials say they still hold out hope that relations will improve. ''There is one condition for us to have healthy relations with the United States,'' said Vice Minister Mari Pili Hernández, who handles relations with Washington. ''It's called respect.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCCAUL of Texas). 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.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my special order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE NEEDS TO ACT NOW

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago a P–3 Orion aircraft, owned by Aero-Union, on contract to the U.S. Forest Service, crashed in California. This crash in and of itself reduced the current Federal fleet of nonmilitary, firefighting planes by 10 percent. It probably also will lead to the grounding of the remaining nine Federal aircraft currently available for firefighting in the United States. So here we are, quickly approaching the fire season, and our Federal fleet of civilian firefighting aircraft, which was 33 strong only 2 years ago, will most likely be nonexistent this year.

Yes, we may have a few small crop dusters. We have some helicopters available. But if the wind comes up and a major conflagration gets out of control, our frontline firefighters will have no real backup. This would be a calamity of death and destruction, made all the worse because it is avoidable if we act now.

To have us become so defenseless is inexcusable. Not to take the steps immediately to end this vulnerability would be even worse. So what do we do?

Today I am calling on the leadership of the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to take the steps necessary to prevent a fire catastrophe later this year. Do not leave us helpless and our firefighters vulnerable and unable to thwart a blaze for lack of a large tanker aircraft which should be available. And do not tell me that it cannot be done unless we have billions of dollars. The U.S. Forest Service regulations establishing the requirements for airplane-based firefighting are obviously designed to protect the good old boys and to discourage anyone else with new approaches and new alternatives. I am suggesting that the U.S. Forest Service drop its obstructionist policies that have prevented, among other things, the use of foreign firefighting aircraft to extinguish major fires in the United States.

Specifically, the Russians have invested a large amount of money in large capacity firefighting air tankers. We wanted them to invest in this. We wanted them to invest in these things rather than in military hardware. Well, they invested and they can be anywhere in the United States or yes, anywhere in the world, in less than 24 hours. They have already played a significant role in extinguishing huge fires in Australia, Greece, and elsewhere. Yet the U.S. Forest Service has blocked the Russians from providing their services here, even as we endured massive fire destruction in places like Florida, New Mexico, and in California. This stonewalling and obstructionism has gone on for 10 years, even as our Federal firefighting air fleet deteriorated, and even as lives, homes, and other property were being lost to out-of-control fires.

This year there has been considerably more rainfall in southern California than usual. It does not take a genius to predict that the increased rainfall we have already experienced will result in a proliferation of shrub growth, thereby increasing the danger of wildfires later this year. In short, we face a fearsome wildfire threat, and the U.S. Forest Service needs to act now, or we will have no large capacity firefighting aircraft tankers available should the worst occur. If we contract with the Russians who have large capacity firefighting aircraft ready to go, we will save lives and property, even if we do that as just a stop-gap measure until domestic aircraft is built and can be introduced.

If the U.S. Forest Service does it right and does it right now, takes the steps that are required for these Russian air tankers to assist us in extinguishing a major wildfire and make those steps right now, we can actually save lives and save property. But if they do not take these steps now and we lose property senselessly, they will be held accountable. If disaster strikes and people and animals die and valuable property is destroyed as huge air tankers that could have helped remain grounded and kept out of the fight, then those responsible will be exposed for this incompetence. But that, unfortunately, will not undo the damage or bring back a life that has been lost.

It is time for the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service to change its attitude, quit trying to protect a good-old-boy network which is unable to function, and to permit others to get into this business, including the Russians, who we would like to have invest in this type of domestic, peaceful technology.

Mr. JERRY T. WILLIAMS,
Director, Fire and Aviation Management, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. WILLIAMS: Reference your 19 Aug 2004 letter, File Code 5700. My staff examined your response to the questions on the Air Tanker grounding by the Forest Service and the possible role of the Russian IL–76 in fighting US wildfires. Your response has raised some very interesting questions. The recent news release saying that the Forest Service is planning to contract for only 10 air tankers has added urgency to our investigations. With the heavy rains in California this last winter, the additional brush and timber will create an extreme fire hazard here in Southern California. A review of your Aerial Resource Bridge Plan for 2005 indicates that you are only going to contact for a maximum of 20 heavy fire fighting aircraft instead of the 33 air tankers that have been available in the past. Your RFP for heavy tankers has excluded the possibility of the use of foreign aircraft such as the IL–76, the CL–215, and the CL–415 to supplement the limited U.S. resources available due to your grounding of the air tanker fleet. It is not clear that the resources will be available to fight the fires if we have a fire season as bad as we had several years ago.

I am requesting that you prepare a briefing for presentation at my Huntington Beach office to set the stage for discussions between your experts and myself in Washington on the air tanker issues. The primary topic would be the FY 05 fire fighting plans with emphasis on the heavy air tanker fleet. Particular emphasis should be given to discussion of your modernization strategy and the role that newer aircraft will be playing. Information on the civilian C–130 fleet that is not included in your bridge plan should be included. Since the military C–130's appear to play an important role in your fire fighting plans, it is inconsistent that the civilian C–130 fleet capabilities have been excluded in your recent RFP. A detailed explanation of this action is requested.

The points of contact for this presentation are Dr. George Kuck in my Huntington Beach office and Chris Minakowski on my Washington staff. Before presenting me with the briefing in Washington, please have your appropriate staff member travel to Huntington Beach for a pre-briefing to Dr. Kuck

and discussions on your strategic overall plan.

Sincerely,

DANA ROHRABACHER,
Member of Congress.

SMART SECURITY AND THE NOMINATION OF JOHN BOLTON

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, when Senator John Danforth stepped down as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations earlier this year, President Bush had an option. He could nominate a new Ambassador who would work with the nations of the world to address the growing threat of terrorism and resource scarcity, or he could nominate one of the usual suspects, someone who would maintain the administration's unilateral thinking. By nominating John Bolton, President Bush chose the latter.

As Under Secretary of State for Arms Control, John Bolton demonstrated his poor leadership skills by bullying his colleagues. He demonstrated disdain for international diplomacy by refusing to meet with certain foreign leaders, and he openly criticized the very institution, the United Nations, to which he now has been nominated to represent the United States. This behavior is not going to win the United States many friends on the international stage.

Without a reelection campaign to worry about, President Bush could have utilized the U.N. ambassadorship as a means of helping America regain its lost credibility as the most important democratic Nation in the world. He could have helped America begin its recovery from the mistakes he made in the run-up to the Iraq war and the international alliances that were shattered as a result. But when it comes to addressing America's lost credibility around the world, it remains business as usual for the White House. It seems that the Bush administration has more important matters to take care of, like the shameful way it is working to end the decades-old tradition of the filibuster in the Senate.

The nomination of John Bolton epitomizes the Bush administration's not-so-subtle pattern of disregard for multilateral institutions. Whenever possible, President Bush and his administration continue to sway from the international consensus, not towards it.

But the fight against international terrorism does not belong to a single country, particularly in this era of globalization. When the Internet connects people thousands of miles apart at the mere click of a button, we need to recognize that we are all in it together, because acts of terrorism, abusive regimes, and resource scarcity affect everyone, everyone on the globe. That is why it is more important than ever to work with other nations and the multilateral institutions that guide them, like the United Nations and the international criminal court.

Mr. Speaker, next week, I will reintroduce the SMART Security resolution legislation that does take into consideration the need for international cooperation in the post-September 11 world. In order to effectively address the threat of terrorism, SMART Security works to strengthen international institutions and respect for the rule of law. We cannot possibly strengthen the United Nations if our own U.N. Ambassador has contempt for the institution he is trying to serve.

Instead of continuing to emphasize our differences with other nations, the United States needs to break its current cycle of shameful unilateralism. We need to court the institutions that used to celebrate America's participation, and our efforts must not stop there. If the U.S. expects other countries to relinquish pursuit of nuclear weapons, then we had better honor our international commitments to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, to the Biological Weapons Convention, to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

□ 2015

The United States is at its strongest when we lead the rest of the world towards peaceful resolution of conflicts by working with the rest of the world. This is the way we need to address the growing crisis in Iran and North Korea and the way to ensure that members of international terrorist groups like al Qaeda are caught and brought to justice. The ambassadors that serve the United States abroad reflect our values here at home. The nomination of John Bolton as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations is not consistent with America's best values, our commitment to peace and freedom, our compassion for the people of the world, and our capacity for multilateral leadership. It is time the Bush administration started working with the nations of the world. That world needs to begin here at home.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak in the place of the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE).

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

There was no objection.

DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise President Bush's ongoing efforts to carry democracy and freedom to the farthest corners of the Middle East.

Like some of my colleagues, I have had the opportunity recently to travel to this part of the world, to Iraq, to Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Cypress and Israel. These experiences left me extremely encouraged about the prospect of freedom in the Middle East. I believe we are witnessing a crucial moment in world history as democracy is planting roots in countries previously overrun by terrorists and tyrants.

The most visible instance of this is in Iraq. Four short months ago, Iraqi citizens braved terrorist threats and bodily harm to turn out at the polls in amazing numbers. Today, the fruits of their labor are evident, and the Iraqi people can finally look forward to a future in a free and a democratic society. They have a government that serves as a voice for all Iraqis, be they Kurdish, Sunni, Shiite, Christian, or any of the many other ethnic and religious groups represented in the new government.

Like the Iraqi people, citizens of Afghanistan are also enjoying new-found freedoms. Our United States Armed Forces have liberated millions of Afghans, paving the way for a democratic Afghani government, one that is committed to fighting terrorism on its own.

But Iraq and Afghanistan are not the only nations where freedom is marching, Mr. Speaker. The roots of democracy grow wide, and they have begun their spread into Iran, Syria, Palestine, Libya, and perhaps even Saudi Arabia. The list of democratic accomplishments in the region is growing, suggesting that a true change in outlook and culture is occurring in the Middle East.

Syria has begun pulling its troops out of Lebanon. Israel is working with the Palestinian people to pull troops and settlers out of Gaza, and the post-Arafat PLO is increasingly willing to put this kind of diplomacy over terrorism. Libya has begun the voluntary dismantling of its nuclear program, and Egypt has agreed to allow multicandidate elections.

Any one of these accomplishments alone would be reason to rejoice; but taken together, they signal an ever-growing, irrevocable force for change across the globe. What we are accomplishing in the Middle East is far more than winning the war on terror. We are winning the war of ideas. People around the globe are crying out for freedom.

Democracy, representation, the opportunity to disagree, these are all essential developments that foster freedom; and we are seeing them spread

across the Middle East. People are choosing democracy over dictators and demagogues, and I am extremely encouraged by these developments.

Mr. Speaker, the naysayers among us, those who said fair democratic elections in Iraq would never occur, who said this region would never accept democracy, they have been proven wrong. Freedom is a universal ideal, one that knows no boundaries or borders. As President Bush so often reminds us, freedom truly is on the march.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

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

There was no objection.

WHY DO THEY HATE US?

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the great unanswered question of the 21st century is, why do they hate us?

We have to find out. The answer relates directly to the safety and security of America and every American, wherever we live.

Why does the world not see us the way we see ourselves? Strong, generous, eager to share what makes us unique. ''We hold these truths to be self evident.''

Why? Why can they not perceive the America that we know?

Well, several incidents recently give us clues as to the riddle of why the world cannot except our raison d'etre.

A few weeks ago we strongly objected to the Japanese government's effort to establish a contract with Iran for much-needed energy. We told them do not do it.

This is the continuation of a quarter-of-a-century-old foreign policy initiative: isolate Iran; that will force them to bend to our will.

But Iran is rich in resources, and I think the conclusion follows naturally from these circumstances. When it comes to Iran, economic isolation equals nuclear proliferation.

Attempting to curb, stifle, or choke off the natural economic progress of a nation with supplies very much in demand is unlikely to be effective. It certainly has not worked for a quarter of a century, no matter which party has had the White House.

Iran is a nation rich in natural energy resources which some nations will seek to leverage regardless of what U.S. policy is.

Today, 14 percent of China's energy needs are met with energy resources from Iran. No one should doubt the obvious. This energy relationship will go on in coming years.

We lean on Japan, but that has no impact on China or Russia or others in the region. If anything, it is an incentive for Iran to deepen its economic and political ties elsewhere.

In attempting to isolate Iran, we may be, in the end, isolating ourselves from the seemingly unstoppable economic and geopolitical expansion in Asia and the Middle East.

A few days after we expressed our extreme concerns to Japan, something happened that did not receive widespread news coverage in the United States. Last year, Japan financed the equivalent of the entire U.S. deficit, $400 billion.

Now, some in Japan have expressed a preference for the Euro. Japan is our friend, a strong and close ally. It seems to me if our friends are struggling with our foreign policy decisions, imagine what our nonfriends are doing. They are using it to isolate the U.S. from the rest of the world.

Not long after our concerns were expressed to Japan, we showed the iron fist again when Iran, Pakistan, and India began to talk of a pipeline for South Asia across Pakistan to supply energy to starved West India.

The President has defined Iran as the Axis of Evil. The U.S., to put it diplomatically, prefers to end the religious government in Iran where we might change the rhetoric from the Axis of Evil to the access, A-C-C-E-S-S to natural resources.

Our vocal and public expressions against the Iranian Government were noticed. Iran's leaders took a page out of our playbook. We call them the Axis of Evil. They call us the Great Satan.

Lately, the administration has ramped up on the nuclear weapons of mass destruction rhetoric, leaving some to fear or speculate about whether the rhetoric is really the base case for a new preemptive action.

One hears Condoleezza Rice threatening sanctions against those who engage in commerce in Iran. It just so happened that entire nations like India and Pakistan fall into that rhetorical trap.

A proposal to build a pipeline from Iran through Pakistan to serve energy needs in India has been called a peace pipeline. It is the latest positive step between two great nations with a long history of tension and bloodshed.

If the IRA and Northern Ireland can resolve differences, surely there is hope for Kashmir. The signs of hope are there; but like a seed planted in fertile ground, the hope for lasting peace must be nurtured.

Instead, our one-size-fits-all foreign policy aimed at Iran hits India and Pakistan as well. We end up trying to punish Iran by undercutting India and Pakistan.

India's energy problems are real. The future of the nation depends on securing stable energy resources. Yet, U.S. foreign policy meant to punish Iran hurts America's friends and America's foreign policy.

We are telling India and Pakistan to abandon the peace pipeline because we do not like Iran. But we are saying there will be severe consequences for our friends if they do not follow our orders.

Why are we trying to prevent India from solving one of its most pressing energy problems, chronic energy shortage?

We have not isolated Iran. We have merely strongly encouraged Iran to build economic and political relationships everywhere else. We like to pretend our effort in Iran has been effective. I think it is time for us to admit we need a complete reassessment and overhaul of our failing foreign policy beginning in Iran.

In my judgment, it is time to put economic democracy on the table, and there is no place like starting with India and Pakistan.

Their destiny should be in the hands of Indians and Pakistanis. The Administration has been declaring veto power.

Iran, Cuba, and a host of other foreign policy initiatives have shown us that this approach does not work. And our intention to approve or veto the destiny of other nations will not last.

I worry about Iran as much as any Republican and Democrat leader.

But we cannot deny what we know to be true. Our current foreign policy—in philosophy and practice—has been most effective at isolating America.

It's time we revise our vision to something sustainable and tolerable.

We can start by encouraging regional cooperation in Central and South Asia. We can start by encouraging peace, perhaps symbolized by the so called peace pipeline. We have helped Iran win many friends in recent years.

Now it is time to envision a foreign policy which makes it more likely that Iran, the world's second largest holder of natural gas, will focus on developing natural gas instead of nuclear energy that could form the basis for a nuclear threat.

Surely, our experience in Iraq and its problems should have taught us something about the ultimate futility of trying to solve everything with a gun.

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

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

UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO VOTE BY MAIL ACT OF 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act of 2005, a bill to allow any eligible voter to vote by mail in a Federal election if he or she chooses to do so.

In my home State of California, voters already have this right. California is one of 25 States that already provides this convenient alternative to voting.

While I personally love the ritual of going to the polls to vote, I know that getting to the polls on Election Day is often difficult. And for some, it is impossible.

That is why I have introduced a bill that builds upon the growing trend of States to bring the polls to the voters. I believe we should try to meet our constituents halfway by increasing access to the electoral process.

What I am proposing is not new or even untested. States ranging from my home State of California to Wisconsin to North Carolina to Maine have already adopted this voter-friendly policy.

Citizens can vote from the convenience of their own homes. They will have more time to mull over their choices and make informed decisions. And they will be able to do so on their own terms, potentially avoiding long lines at the polls.

Not surprisingly, studies have shown that some of the bigger supporters of voting by mail are parents who must schedule time to go to the polls around so many other obligations.

Studies have also indicated that adding the option to vote by mail does not create a partisan advantage for one political party over the other. Republicans and Democrats both benefit from similar increases in voter turnout when voters are given the choice to mail in their ballots.

In fact, overwhelming support for voting by mail is consistent across nearly every demographic, be that age, income level, race, education, employment status, and ideology. It is a win-win for all Americans.

After adopting a universal right to vote by mail system in 1978, California saw a 30 percent increase in the use of mail-in ballots.

In my district of San Diego, 40 percent of voters opted to mail in their votes during the 2004 election. And other States that have implemented this policy have seen the same degree of support from voters, which is why it is hardly surprising that States offering the option of mail-in ballots often experience greater voter participation.

States providing universal access to mail-in ballots during the 2004 election saw a 6.7 percent increase in voter turnout. And again, this increase was uniform across all demographics, including political affiliation.

There is also extremely low incidence of fraud with voting by mail when compared to other methods of voting. The State of Oregon, which runs its elections entirely by mail, has prosecuted only four cases of fraud over the last six elections.

Mr. Speaker, as the former president of the League of Women Voters of San Diego, I care deeply about the integrity of our electoral system. Twenty-five States have already proven this option works and it is safe. It is time to give voters in the remaining States this convenient, secure, and affordable alternative.

While I am proud to be from a State where citizens already have this right, I believe democracy works best when all citizens have an equal opportunity to have their voices heard. Right now, an uneven playing field exists between States that already offer the option of mail-in ballots and States that do not.

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When the same election is more accessible to voters in California than it is to voters in Maryland, the system is unfair.

States that fail to offer this choice stand to compromise their leverage in Federal elections by curbing the greatest level of voter participation. We should follow the lead of half of our Nation's States and ensure a uniformity of rights for all voters.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this effort to strengthen the Democratic process and give American voters the choices they deserve.

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

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

PRESSING ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this evening I wanted to share my thoughts with my colleagues on some of the pressing issues that I think we have missed, particularly with the schedule that we now have. I think the world is crying out for this Congress to act and to act constructively and productively. There are several issues, both international and domestic, that we simply have failed to address.

I want to associate myself with the remarks of my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from the great State of Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) on the progress that India and Pakistan have made. I have congratulated both Ambassadors from Pakistan and India personally for the great leadership shown by the Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan, two countries that have been known to be in conflict, sitting down around the table of friendship, talking about energy resources, opening consular offices, solving problems such as Kashmir, working with cultural exchange.

Why should this Nation not applaud them? I hope my colleagues will join me in a resolution that will support and applaud the works of both the President and the Prime Minister of the respective nations. I agree with my good friend from Washington, why should we, with our politics against Iran, eliminate the opportunities for two nuclear giants to begin to solve their energy problems and maybe, by chance, both of them striving towards democracy, having a positive influence on Iran?

So I hope that my resolution offered to the Congress and signed on by a number of my colleagues will be on the floor of the House to emphasize peace.

Today completed the 60-city tour of the President of the United States regarding the issue of Social Security. I am glad, however, that we joined many thousands on Capitol Hill to emphasize that Social Security does not belong to the debate of one single party. In actuality it is an American debate. That debate requires an open mind, but particularly we need to focus the American people on what Social Security is and is not. It is not the private savings account or the bank account for Wall Street. It is not the proof that we are in a capitalist society. It is an insurance program. It provides survivor benefits, disability benefits for those disabled Americans who want to live independently.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stop going on the road. Come back to Washington, sit down at the table of negotiation with Democrats and Republicans talking about one issue, and that is how to make Social Security solvent. We did it in 1983 with President Reagan and Tip O'Neill, and it was solvent for now 42 years.

There is no reason why we cannot sit down and solve the problem with Social Security without a private savings account that dips into your pocket, takes the money to Wall Street and provides the hugest deficit that you could ever imagine. In fact, to make a private savings account, you need to take $1.7 trillion out of the Social Security account. We are already in terrible straits with the deficit that is spiraling down and creating a burden on our children and grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak very quickly about the work that we need to do on the Committee on the Judiciary. We need to protect our State courts and Federal courts. We had a very informative hearing before our committee today, but we need to work to ensure that there are more U.S. marshals and Federal laws that will protect and prevent violence against State courts and Federal courts; new laws,

new mandatory sentences to do it, but real preventative measures, which more law enforcement, more training does.

I would also say I have asked the Committee on the Judiciary today to hold a hearing on a horrific video that I saw, a 5-year-old being handcuffed in Florida. A 5-year-old who does not have the intent, cannot go into a court of law and even be judged to have the appropriate intent to be prosecuted or to be able to testify. Two large police officers, one large teacher, and I love teachers, but this, excuse me, administrator, I believe this was a deputy principal, could not handle a 5-year-old. A mother, a working mother on a job that could not get there quickly, but got to school and they would not let her see her 5-year-old. What an outrage.

I believe that school system and that district and the State of Florida needs to be penalized for the kind of reckless, irresponsible stigmatizing of a 5-year-old. You could have called the mental health authorities. You could have waited. You could have given her a toy and a television set to calm her down; but yet two big police officers put her in the police car with handcuffs for a little girl who was disruptive. What an outrage.

I think we can do better than this and I am going do write legislation to punish school districts who do not understand how to deal with 5-year-olds, particularly those who do not understand that 5-year-olds do not need to be handcuffed. Did she have a gun in her hands? A knife in her hands? A 5-year-old.

I hope we can do further work on prescription drugs and meth labs, since even in my local schools we are facing that, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, let me conclude by saying, Mr. Speaker, I think the national ID, the bill that will pass in the Senate that gives us a national ID card with a driver's license, which the 9/11 Commission did not say, we need real immigration reform. Giving national ID cards does not keep the terrorists from the border. We need to protect the borders. We need more border patrol agents. That is how we secure the homeland, not national ID cards invading the privacy of Americans.

POWERFUL PHARMACEUTICAL LOBBYISTS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today on the front page of USA Today's business page, there was a headline, ''Pharmaceutical Industry Goes Furthest to Sway Congress.''

Last year the pharmaceutical industry spent $158 million, just last year, to lobby Members of the United States Congress and Senate.

Now, I know you may be shocked to know that it may not have been in your interest, $158 million to lobby the Members of the United States Congress and Senate. Since 1998, in 6 years, they have spent three-quarters of a billion dollars lobbying, wining, dining Members of the United States Congress, taking them on golf trips, taking them on vacations, taking them to conferences, taking them out to meals, all to tell them about their industry.

There are 1,300 pharmaceutical registered lobbyists. There are only 535 Members of the United States Congress and Senate. There are 2½ lobbyists for every Member. Three-quarters of a billion dollars in 6 years, $158 million last year alone, and 1,300 lobbyists working on behalf of the industry.

About 475 of them, according to this article, are former Federal Government employees; 40 of them are former Members of Congress. It is the most influential and well-financed lobbying operation in Washington.

Challenging the drug companies is always a costly undertaking, and, more often than not, it is a very difficult one and a losing one. But I want you to know what you are getting for your $158 million.

Congress, when it passed a prescription drug bill last Congress, the 108th, we prevented the United States Government from negotiating prices like the Veterans Administration does, like Wal-Mart does, like Sam's Club does when they want to negotiate. When they want to deal with a supplier they negotiate best prices, not the United States Government. It explicitly prevents the United States Government from negotiating on behalf of Medicare for 43 million seniors for the lowest possible price.

What does it say to our taxpayers? What does it say to our senior citizens? We are not going to do best business practices like Sam's Club, like Lowe's, like other people who negotiate price. We will send you out there and make you pay the highest price possible, which is why the United States taxpayers and senior citizens pay the highest pharmaceutical prices of any major industrialized country in the world. That is what you got for their $158 million.

What else did we get for that $158 million that they spent lobbying Members of Congress? We got a bill that prevented the reimportation of pharmaceutical products from Canada and Europe so we could not get competition and choice in the marketing of prices. That is why people in Canada pay 50 percent cheaper prices than we do here in the United States.

What else did that $158 million get? It does not allow generic medications to come to market to compete against name-priced drugs. Every principle of the free market, whether you negotiate prices based on Medicare, just like Sam's Club, whether you allow competition through the free market and allow people to buy their drugs in Canada and Europe and use competition for Lipitor and for other types of products, or whether you allow generics to come to the market in a speedier time to compete against the name brand, every principle in the free market was prevented.

We have a captive market in this country. We pay the most expensive prices. And the irony of ironies is that the American taxpayer through the R&D, Research and Development tax credit, subsidizes the research for the products that we buy, and we pay top dollar. That is why somebody has to do something about the $158 million, the three-quarters of a billion dollars, in 6 years, spent on behalf of an industry that has got the best government they can get for their resources they spend; 1,300 lobbyists working for the pharmaceutical industry; 2½ lobbyists for every Member of Congress.

When you are working on their legislation, if you work down the halls of Congress and you see a shadow, it is usually theirs, not yours. Three-quarters of a billion dollars in 6 years, $158 million last year alone.

It is estimated that the United States Congress, when it passed the prescription drug bill last Congress, that it resulted in an additional $150 billion over 10 years to the industry's profits. They know what they are doing. They know what they are getting for their money. They know what they are getting for their meals, for their lobbying, for their trips; but it is time that this Congress spoke up on behalf of the American people, the people that elected us, both the taxpayers and the senior citizens, and get them the types of medications they need at prices they can afford, and stand up to the lobbyists from the pharmaceutical industry who are only representing their narrow interests and have lost sight of what we have to do to represent the American people.

CREDIBLE ETHICS PROCESS

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Speaker, on March 1 of this year I introduced a resolution, House Resolution 131, that would repeal the ill-conceived amendment to the House ethics rules that were included in the rules package adopted at the beginning of this Congress.

Although this resolution has now gained 208 co-sponsors, the Committee on Rules to which it has been referred has not yet taken any action on it. Accordingly, it now becomes necessary to begin to invoke the procedures provided by House Rule 15, to discharge a measure from the committee.

To that end, today I am introducing a resolution that provides terms for the consideration of House Resolution 131 by the full House. Under House Rule 15, a discharge petition may be filed

with regard to this resolution after 7 legislative days.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate that what is at issue with House Resolution 131 is, in fact, whether the House of Representatives is going to continue to have a credible ethics process that can be effective in protecting the reputation and the integrity of this great institution. And for at least two reasons, the House will not and cannot have a credible ethics process unless the Republican-inspired rules changes made earlier this year are repealed.

First, there cannot be a credible ethics process in the House unless it is genuinely bipartisan. By definition, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct was created as a bipartisan organization within a very partisan body, and its rules have always been fashioned through a bipartisan task force.

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Until this year, the House clearly and repeatedly recognized that bipartisanship must extend to the creating of the rules under which the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct conducts its business; and in the past, changes in those rules were made in an open, in a thoughtful, and in a genuinely bipartisan manner.

But this year, Mr. Speaker, in contrast to past tradition, the rules changes were drafted solely on the recommendation of the majority, in a partisan, in a closed, in a secret process in which no one on the Democrat side of the aisle was even consulted. So the rules were adopted on a strict party line vote: all the Republicans voting for; all the Democrats voting against.

Mr. Speaker, this is the most partisan vote we cast in the House of Representatives. Never in the history of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has there been an attempt to impose rules in this manner on the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Mr. Speaker, the second concern about these rules changes is there has been an attempt to impose them on the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct in a very partisan way, but the rules in and of themselves are extremely damaging. The fact is that, at a minimum, these rules changes will seriously undermine the ability of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to perform its key responsibilities of investigating and making decisions on allegations of wrongdoing.

These rules changes fall into three categories.

First, there is the so-called automatic dismissal rule under which a complaint against a Member that is filed with the committee can be dismissed solely with the passage of time, no consideration of its merits. Under this automatic dismissal rule, that period of time can be as brief as 45 days from the date that the complaint is deemed to satisfy the procedural requirements of the rules. Previously, a complaint could be dismissed only by majority vote of the committee.

The effect of this automatic dismissal rule will be to give the committee members a means by which they can avoid their responsibility to give thoughtful, reasoned consideration to every complaint and to all of the charges in every complaint. Its ultimate effect will be to provoke partisanship and deadlock among committee members as they wait for the clock to run out. Does the majority really want this result?

Another of the rules changes is that it grants certain so-called due process rights to Members. One of those rights is the right to demand that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct conduct a trial on a matter on which it has not even conducted a formal investigation. This so-called right would place the committee in the position of having to hold a trial on a matter in which it has not issued a single subpoena. Does the majority really want this result?

The third rule change, Mr. Speaker, is the so-called right to counsel provision which might be better characterized as the right to orchestrate testimony provision or the right to allow collusion among the accused and the witnesses. It would provide that one lawyer can represent the accused and all of the witnesses. Does the majority really want this result?

Mr. Speaker, I continue to urge my colleagues to look closely at the rules changes and the partisan manner in which they were adopted. By adoption of House Resolution 131, the House can begin to undo the damage that has been done to the ethics process, and we will be able to have once again an ethics process that commands the confidence and respect of both the Members of this body, and Mr. Speaker, most importantly, the American people, who, I believe, on a bipartisan basis want a bipartisan Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE TO UNITED STATES CAPITOL PRESERVATION COMMISSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOHMERT). Pursuant to 40 U.S.C. 188a, and the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the United States Capitol Preservation Commission:

Mr. LEWIS, California

Mr. SHUSTER, Pennsylvania.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, April 26, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to (40 U.S.C. 188a), I hereby appoint Representative MARCY KAPTUR of Ohio to the United States Capitol Preservation Commission.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, votes on motions to suspend the rules postponed earlier today will be taken tomorrow.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, once again, it is a pleasure to be before the House along with my colleagues of the 30-something Working Group. We would like to thank the Democratic leader for allowing us, once again, to address the Members of the House and the American people on issues that are facing the 30-somethings and the entire population of the United States.

I think it is important as Members of Congress that we understand our obligation to the American people, making sure that they fully understand what happens in their house of democracy.

Many times in Washington, D.C., we are here, we are making decisions that are going to affect all of our constituents and even ourselves and our families. So I think it is important we take it very seriously.

We come back again tonight. Of course, we have the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) and also the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), my good friend from south Florida; and we are here to talk about Social Security. So I think we will just start off just kind of talking about some of the things and some of the events that took place today.

This was a very eventful day for Social Security and making sure that Americans are able to get what they deserve as it relates to their full benefits on Social Security and making sure that we do not gamble with their retirement.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Absolutely, this was a unique day.

Apparently, we reached the 60th day that the President has been out in America trying to sell the American people on his vague outlines of his proposal to privatize Social Security; and quite honestly, at the conclusion of the

60 days, apparently he has said that he wants to go out for another 120 days.

We had a rally today with more than 1,000 people in the crowd and over a hundred Members of Congress from both the House and the Senate Democratic caucuses, standing completely united in opposition to pulling the safety net out from under our retirees' retirement security, and we stood strong. We stood together. We stood together when people did not think that that was possible, that there was definitely, over the last few months, a lack of confidence that the Democrats would stand together united opposing privatization. We have all the way up until today and we will continue to be standing in opposition to privatizing Social Security.

Actually, at the conclusion of today's rally, we stood together and said, Mr. President, please do go out for another 120 days and tell the American people that you want to pull the safety net out from under their retirement security because apparently the more he talks about it, the less the American people like it. So we encourage the President to continue to go out and talk about it, continue to restrict the crowds and limit the access to his town hall meetings where he checks tickets at the door, checks people's philosophies at the door, as opposed to our effort where we are being as inclusive as possible.

We do not screen our crowds. We had more than 400 town hall meetings across the country in our districts as House and Senate Democrats, and we take all comers. Some of us have had maybe a couple of people here and there who have come to our meetings and said why do you not give the President's proposal a try, but almost universally our Members have experienced the communication from our constituents that, above all else, they expect us to be up here in Washington and protect their retirement security.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. No doubt about it, of all the Social Security meetings that I have had, not one citizen in my district has stood up and said anything to the effect of let us take a close look at these private accounts. Young people included have been coming. I have three universities in my district, and even the young students still recognize it.

We get kind of cynical maybe every now and again up here and think that somehow that spin and manipulation somehow will always work; and the facts maybe do not always get out, but I find it very heartening that the President can go out and try to sell a proposal and poll after poll after poll continues to show him losing support on this. I think it is very heartening to know that the American people pay very close attention to these issues especially when they affect their pocketbook like Social Security does, and they look closely at what the President is talking about, and yet they still disagree with what the President is saying.

It is very good, and I think that the key factor is that the President's proposal weakens Social Security. It does not strengthen it.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I think it is important to highlight, again, this is the 60th day of the President's nationwide, cross-country tour; and one would have expected with the bully pulpit that he has the momentum that he believed that he was going to be able to build behind his vague proposal that by the 60th day, by today, that he would have Americans swinging from the chandeliers in the Capitol, insisting that we take up his proposal and that somebody file a bill.

We have yet to see a bill offered in this Chamber or in the Chamber across the rotunda, and I think it is interesting to note that these are some of the comments and analyses that have been made at the conclusion of his 60-day tour:

''The President's campaign has frightened people, raising concerns that guaranteed benefits could be cut,'' said William Schneider, who is a public opinion scholar and CNN analyst. ''There's very little evidence in polls that Bush's campaign has been effective.''

''As he nears the end of a 60-day cross-country campaign, President Bush appears to be further from achieving his signature goal of transforming Social Security than when he began.'' That was from USA Today just yesterday, and that was the tip of the iceberg in terms of the commentary and analysis.

I just wonder when the President and the leadership of this body are going to get it. When are they going to tell us, when are they going to come to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) and to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) and say, okay, we are taking privatization off the table; clearly we do not have any support for that; Americans do not want us to compromise their retirement security, and we are ready to come to the table and compromise, like they did in 1983 when Tip O'Neill and Ronald Reagan came together and preserved Social Security for generations to come. It is just mind-boggling. It really is.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, it makes you wonder. You go 60 days. You do not sell your program. In fact, it gets progressively worse every trip that you make, and then you decide that, well, we are going to go out for another 60 days.

It makes you wonder if this thing is not a distraction from some of the real issues that we are facing today, and I hate to be cynical in the 30-something group. We are supposed to be the optimists of this body, but it is very difficult for me to believe that this maybe is not a little ploy to distract and say, look over here while we cut Medicaid, we cut food stamps, we cut community development block grants, we cut veterans benefits. Look at the real issues today. The President is trying to say this is a great crisis; 2042 is when we have before there is any structural change at all in the program.

Gas prices, I am sure my colleague is hearing about that in her district because of the oil costs, health care, immigration, issues, the Chinese and manipulation of their currency and dumping into our markets. Instead of saying we need to focus on an alternative energy program so that we could somehow reduce the cost of gas at the pumps, we are talking about a manufactured crisis that starts in 2042, not dealing with the day-to-day pocketbook issues that the people in my community and Florida have to deal with every day.

□ 2100

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure that my colleague was able to get that thought out, because it is so very, very important, what he was saying.

I tell you this: I was encouraged. I was not only encouraged by the polling numbers released recently but also about the number of people that showed up at the rally today here at the Capitol; and many of them looking forward to getting to that Social Security age were not silver and blue-haired individuals saying it is about me right now. These were hardworking Americans that came to this Capitol, to this great democracy we speak of, so their voice can be heard. I can tell you that I was encouraged.

Mr. Speaker, I may digress a little as it relates to talking about what Social Security is all about, but I think it is worth saying that Democrats, not only here but in the other body across the hall, and in general here in Washington, D.C, we believe in bipartisanship. We talk about the 1983 vote an awful lot, but I want to let you know that in 1983, when Ronald Reagan, then President, and Tip O'Neill, then Speaker in a Democratic House, passed a bipartisan Social Security plan that would keep Social Security solvent for another 47 to 50 years, as it relates from this point on, from right now, today, as I speak, 100 percent of benefits going to the individuals that would be receiving it, be it in survivor benefits or retirement benefits, and it was a bill of bipartisan nature. In 1983, we passed a bill saving Social Security, with 243 Members voting for it and 102 voted against it. Eighty Republicans voted for it, 163 Democrats voted for it. That is bipartisanship. That is a bipartisan bill.

And we are not going to get there if the individuals that are in charge, the majority seems to be the Republicans in this House, do not come to grips in

having a true bipartisan dialogue in saving Social Security, and not the rhetoric of someone else wanting Social Security to be privatized. I am not talking about Wall Street, which is going to benefit by some $940 billion if Social Security is privatized. That is a guarantee to them. But what is a guarantee to the people, our constituents, Democrats, Republicans, independents alike? The only thing they have guaranteed is their $26,000-and-change in a Federal debt they are going to have to pay because the President wants to continue to talk about this privatization piece.

One other thing I just want to add. I think it is important people understand the numbers on Social Security. Forty-eight million Americans are enjoying those benefits right now. Some people want to talk about where is the Democratic plan? Well, where is the Republican plan? Right now, we are talking about philosophy. There was a hearing over in the Senate. Well, there are hundreds of hearings on this Hill every day. Still, we are not at the point to where we can come to grips on a bipartisan approach. On this side of the aisle we are saying we want to be bipartisan.

Now, hats off to Americans. The reason why no one is marching with a plan and we do not have a binded copy of some plan is the fact that the Republicans know full well, the Republican leadership, and there are some colleagues on the other side of the aisle that are saying no way, Jose, if I can say that.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You can say that.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. No way we are going to hand up our constituents because someone else wants to privatize Social Security. I did not sign up for that. That is what I am hearing some of these Republicans saying. It is a very small number, hopefully a growing number, because I believe for those that are speaking boldly about privatization of Social Security, I think they are making a career decision, a career decision in a democracy where people believe in having the retirement that they were promised.

The other point I want to make here is to mention today's newspapers, and I took some sections out. Account after account of Americans not being with the President on this. I am sorry, this is not the Meek-Wasserman-Schultz-Ryan Report. This is reality. Now, if the President wants to burn Federal jet fuel, taxpayers' dollars, at $55,000 an hour to fly on Air Force One to go tell people, and I might add these are canned crowds of individuals who have love and respect for the President, and I also have respect for the President, for the office that he holds, because he is my President too. He is President to us all. We support him as our Commander in Chief. But when we are wrong, we are wrong.

So I do not care how many times you say, oh, well, privatization is good and we will save Social Security. Matter of fact, he said to the contrary; that it would not alone save Social Security. So I am proud of the people that are out there saying what they are saying. But I think it is important that we remember if this is about future generations, then the President is doing just the opposite. We are talking about $26,349.67, the average 30-something; the average college student that is graduating with a postgraduate degree or what have you, on average, $20,000 in debt. Add to that the $26,000 of the Federal debt they are going to have to pay, and you might as well make that $46,000 and some change.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And growing.

Mr. MEEK. And growing.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if I may interrupt the gentleman, I would add that tuition costs are doubling, and this number keeps growing every week. Every single day this clock is actually ticking here, $7.79 trillion. We lifted the debt ceiling a few months back, and this number is also ticking. So we are talking in a few months you are going to be up to owing the government or student loans or banks $50,000.

Imagine a kid being born today owes $26,000. Is that opportunity? Is that ownership? Is that freedom? All the big themes that we like to talk about in Washington, D.C. This is trapping a generation of kids.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And that is a perfect point, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes in our spare time, as we fly back and forth from our districts that we represent, I do a little something with that number, that $26,349.67 and counting. You could buy a new car for that, every American, not just Americans living in certain parts of the country.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. A pretty decent car.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Yes, a pretty decent car. You could pay for 4 years of education at a public university. I got that from the College Board. For some of our young people, freedom in America, that buys about 2,250 CDs. I mean, we are talking to America here. You could also go on a luxury cruise around the world for four. You could buy groceries for five families for a year. That is from the Congressional Budget Office. You can put a down payment on a home. Well, that sounds like a great idea. We want more Americans to be in homes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Bingo.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. You could start a small business. You could fly from New York to Hawaii and back 12 times.

The President is marching around here, and the majority side is marching around here saying we are trying to preserve Social Security for future generations; meanwhile it is not tax and spend, it is borrow and spend, and continuing to borrow. They are on borrowfest. They cannot stop themselves. So when folks start talking about, well, the President is flying around and burning taxpayers' dollars at $55,000 an hour, that is more than two or three people make in a year in America.

Now, I am not shocked, because the evidence speaks to the highest deficit in the history of the Republic. He cannot help himself. Neither can the members of the majority side help themselves. And I cannot understand how the leadership, and I say the leadership because I do have friends on the other side that get it, and it is up to us here in Congress to make sure. Here on the Democratic side we have our act together, and a number of Members have that number outside their office to remind people when they come walking the halls to see their Member of Congress, this debt is continuing to click. So we have to make sure as Americans that we vote principle over politics. Principle over politics.

So if you are working right now, and if Americans pull their check stubs out right now and look at what they pay in Social Security, and they have the majority side here saying, the leadership once again and the President saying we are looking out for you, meanwhile we are going to add $5 trillion onto that number, meanwhile we are going to cut your benefits.

What they put out as it relates to their plan, they are going to lose 20 percent of their benefits right now, or more, on a gamble of privatization. I cannot understand it. But I can tell you one thing: The American people are not buying it because the polling numbers are reflecting that.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, my colleague and I from Florida are parents, and I know the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYUN) probably plans one day to be a parent. This is the 30-something Working Group.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If my wife says it is okay.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Exactly. Once you get permission. And, believe me, I know that is definitely something that moms need to grant, or potential moms need to grant permission on. But we have little kids, and anyone out there that is a parent can understand what I am going to talk about now in this way.

It is mind-boggling that the President has not gotten off, after 60 days, the concept of privatization. I liken it to when my children do not like that I have told them no and they stamp their feet and they throw a tantrum. Now, I generally try not to give in, like we are not.

I feel like the Democratic Caucus in the House and Senate are the parents of a child in the White House throwing a temper tantrum, who is insisting that he get his way. And regardless of how many times he is told that he cannot have his way, that sometimes we have to compromise, sometimes we cannot have it exactly the way we want it; just like I explain to my children and I try to sit down and rationally explain to them that we are going to try to give you some of what you want but you are not going to have it

all your way, he continues to stamp his foot just like my kids sometimes do.

It was not lost on me that that was an appropriate analogy. I am certainly hopeful, like I am hopeful with my own kids, that one day they will grow out of it. We keep waiting for the President to grow out of the temper tantrums. It should not be surprising, because we come from a State where his sibling engages in similar activities. It seems to be a family trait. They do not seem to get the message when they are told by their constituents that they are not in agreement with what they are suggesting. They do not appear to be willing to let go and come to the table and compromise.

Now, another analogy I want to draw would be if we were, as Democrats, sticking our heads in the sand because we support Social Security so strongly. If we were here saying there is no problem, Social Security is fine, we should not do anything, then we would be just as guilty as the President and the leadership of this Congress are. But we are not saying that. What we have said from day one is that there is no crisis; that the crisis is manufactured, as my colleague from Ohio said; that we acknowledge that there is a problem, but there is not a problem that reaches anything that we should be significantly concerned about until we in this 30-something Working Group are well into our seventies.

Literally, 36 years from now, in 2041, I will be 74 years old, long past retirement age. When we ask most of our peers, if you ask your friends and our neighbors and friends who are our age, do you think Social Security is going to be there for you, most of our peers do not think it will. But the reality is that it will be there even if we do nothing. And we are not suggesting that we not do anything. We are suggesting that, just like in 1983, that reasonable people on both sides of this debate should come to the table, should try to find some common ground, and should not continue to kick and scream and insist that it is their way or the highway.

Another thing that I wanted to point out, and this is difficult to say, but it is hard to feel that the President is sincere on this issue. When I have a town hall meeting, and I am sure it is this way for my colleagues, I know it is for my colleague from Florida because I have done town hall meetings with him, I really want to know what people think. That is why I do not screen or ask for tickets or check people's opinion at the door.

Literally, the Secret Service this week sent agents to Denver to probe allegations by three area Democrats that they were ousted from President Bush's March 21 event. The three did not stage any protest at the rally and were later told by the Secret Service they were removed because their vehicle displayed an anti-Bush bumper sticker. White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the man who removed them was a GOP volunteer, but apparently Mr. McClellan refused to divulge his name or whether he works in Colorado or Washington.

What Mr. McClellan said to this reporter is if someone is coming to an event to disrupt it, they are going to be asked to leave. Apparently, if you have an opinion that differs from the President's and from the message that is designed for that particular town hall meeting, you are not welcome, even if you plan on sitting there and saying nothing.

Now, I heard the President's State of the Union, I heard his Inaugural address, and I heard him talk about democracy. I heard him talk about promoting democracy around the world and how important it was that the greatest democracy in the world set an example, that we be the shining beacon of democracy around the world and that we export democracy.

□ 2115

Well, you know what, how do we do that if we are not setting the best example of what democracy is all about. Would we like it if other nations, other fledgling democracies, started mirroring the conduct that the President is engaged in? I do not think so. I think if we heard an independent news report about some of the activities that the President has engaged in in this debate, we would be outraged.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And we see where the Russians and Mr. Putin are beginning to crack down on a lot of the democratic movements, taking over a lot of the media, and when a guy like Mr. Yushchenko comes here from the Ukraine, with the scars to prove his fight for democracy, and he stands in front of this Chamber to address our constitutional body that we have, what kind of example is this to send? Yet in the same breath talk about freedom, talk about opportunity. Members would think that as either a legislator or executive, you would want to hear what the dissent is so if you were right, then you would be able to address the issue and explain why you are right.

I think why we see the President's numbers going down, he is speechifying. It is not a give and take at town hall meetings. He is kicking people out if they have an anti-Bush bumper sticker on their car, and pretending like they are the Secret Service. And that is reported. It happened out in Denver, and they are investigating it now.

Answer the concerns of the country, and we will see progress as you begin to advocate and argue for your side.

Funny, the gentlewoman would say that on her flight in from Florida she crunched some numbers, and my flight from Ohio is only an hour, from Cleveland; but I was able to work some numbers, too. We have mentioned here before that if we implement the President's proposal of diverting money into the private accounts, there will be a $5 trillion hole in our budget. Somehow we have to plug the hole. We are going to have to borrow the money and pay interest in order to fund the private accounts.

I did some math trying to figure out what $5 trillion could do for other programs. And since this is the 30-something Hour, I wanted to focus on Pell grants and we were able to get it printed off the cocktail napkin that comes with the Diet Coke and the peanuts on the plane. For Pell Grants, $5 trillion over 20 years could raise the maximum Pell Grant from $4,050 to $59,500. Right now 5.3 million students get the $4,000 maximum, but with the $5 trillion we could have 23.7 million students receive $59,500 worth of college grants to go to schools.

Mr. Speaker, $60,000 would take care of undergrad, masters, and Ph.D. It would get students educated. Many people do not need $60,000 for just a bachelor's degree, so we could cut it in half and give $30,000 to 47 million students.

This is just to illustrate a point. Just think if we plug a hole in a risky ponzi scheme that we are going to have. But imagine if we made this significant investment in education. Imagine the value that would be created from that.

We did a study in Ohio, and for every dollar the State of Ohio spent on higher ed, the State of Ohio would get $2 back in tax money. Imagine what the return on this investment would be. It would be significant. We would have educated, well-rounded citizens participating in democracy, more tolerant, more creative, creating wealth in our society.

What kinds of investments are we making otherwise? We are going to borrow and plug a hole with $5 trillion. What value do we get from that? We are losing jobs left and right, and the biggest crisis is a problem that is in 2041 when we are 70 years old.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, what the gentleman is saying is absolutely true, and to just continue on the same theme the gentleman is referring to, if we are going to talk about crisis and things that are looming that we need to deal with, why are we not talking about Medicare? The President should be stumping around the country to get the Congress to address the looming crisis in Medicare because it could be more easily argued that Medicare's insolvency, which is much sooner than Social Security, is really going to cause us some tremendous problems.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) and I are from a State that if Members want to talk about a crisis, if we have a crisis in Medicare, our constituents are really going to have a dire, serious problem. If that problem is not addressed, then there are senior citizens across this country who will die. There is no question if we do not preserve the ability to provide health care to senior citizens who under this proposal are already going to be in jeopardy because their retirement security is going to be pulled out from

under them, on top of that if we do not fix Medicare, we will not provide them with health care.

I would love to see the President stumping to try to address that problem. I can assure the President he would have a lot more willing participants, at least on our side, at least from me and from Members who represent States with significant senior populations.

Social Security is often thought of as just a program that benefits senior citizens; and people think if you did a man or woman interview on the street, and asked people who benefits from Social Security, virtually everyone on the street would say that Social Security benefits senior citizens.

In Florida, for example, children who are under 17, there are 174,500 current Social Security beneficiaries, kids who are receiving Social Security either because they are dependents of people receiving SSI because they are disabled or they are survivors of a deceased Social Security recipient. Again, that number is 174,530 kids under 17. And between the ages of 18 and 39, 71,870 Floridians receive Social Security benefits.

That is one of the things that has been lost that each week we have been trying to drive home, lost in this privatization debate. The President has basically wiped the table, or essentially wiped the floor, to be a little more direct about it, when it comes to the people who collect Social Security because they are disabled, which is a third, who are disabled, who are survivors and are receiving survivor benefits. They do not earn an income, so what happens to them when we privatize Social Security? Or when there are annuities and we yank Social Security benefits out from under people who are earning an income, and we are doing nothing for people who are survivors or who are disabled? It is like they do not exist. It is like if we ignore them, maybe they will go away.

I have yet to hear a response from the President or the leadership of this Congress about what we are going to do to help people who are disabled and who are survivors of Social Security recipients when Social Security is privatized and then shrivels up and blows away.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, from where I come from, that is a moral issue. That is a moral issue. What do we do with those people who need the help, who access or utilize this program as an insurance program when they lose a spouse at a young age and they have kids, they have survivors, which is a third of the program. That is a moral issue, and we talk a lot about morality, and it has been so narrow and focused on just a couple of issues.

Are we going to say as a country you are on your own again and roll it back to before we implemented the Social Security program? It has been successful. It works, and there are a lot of people out there who have benefited. This was an issue at one of my town hall meetings. There were three or four who came, and it was strictly based on survivorship, disability, and people who have just had a lot of bad luck.

We try to pin labels and say this certain segment is lazy, they do not want to work, they want the easy way out. There is a lot of people trying to make their way out working very, very hard. And for one reason or another, they are sick and make a couple of bad decisions. It is amazing. The more I get out and hear these stories, how many people, one car accident, one sick family member, one death in the family, and the whole thing collapses. This program has been there to say to those folks we are here for you and the government is going to be here, society is going to be here to help you.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is important that everyone understands we come to this floor once a week to share with Americans the truth about what is going on here in Washington, D.C. We are the 30-something Working Group, but this affects the entire family. When there is a family member who has a problem, Social Security is there for them. That alleviates the financial burden on the rest of the family. To be able to say we are a big family and we are going to take care of one another, guess what, times are not good for everybody. You are going to run into those real-life issues. Someone is working now and they pass on, for those individuals that are 17 and under, the only thing they have are survivor benefits. That is something that you leave for your child.

Spiritually, emotionally, the best contribution and the highest contribution you can make to society is to make sure that your children and grandchildren have a better opportunity than you have had. The gentlewoman talked about the President coming to this Chamber during the State of the Union and talking about Social Security. The first thing the President said, if you are over 55, do not worry about it. So I guess folks over 55 are supposed to say, son, daughter, brother, sister, good luck. I am okay, I am over 55, but you better start saving.

Let me say I cannot believe the information that this administration and the majority-side leadership give us. Now, I said this last week, I said it the week before, I said it the week before that, and I will continue to say it because we have to remind Americans you cannot believe everything that your leaders say. This is not about the President and do we like him or not. The election is over. He cannot run again constitutionally. They may try to change that, but as it stands right now, the President cannot run again. So this is not about somebody standing in judgment of his political future.

During the Medicaid-Medicare prescription drug debate it came to the floor, and the President and his office said it would be $350 billion for a prescription drug plan, or lack thereof. Later it moved up to $400 billion. This is from news accounts and also from official documents here in the Congress.

After the debate, after we passed the bill, and I voted against it because we could not negotiate for lower prices. I am from Florida. This is real-life experience. There are seniors, and in that $26,000 number, you can pay for prescription drugs for 11 Americans for the entire year. We are talking real money here on the whole borrow-and-spend issue.

Then we found out recently that the true cost is $724 billion, which is all borrowed. This is not money that we have stacked up on the shelf somewhere, and this is real money, and this is what we are spending.

Folks say, where is the Democratic plan? Guess what, the Democratic plan is in your wallet right now. The bipartisan Democratic plan, the bipartisan continuation of that plan is in your wallet right now. It is those Social Security numbers that you write down every day or every time you fill out an application or you are applying for some sort of credit card. That is the original Democratic plan.

□ 2130

We have 48 million Americans that are celebrating benefits right now from Social Security because we held our word on the deal that it will be there for them when they need it. Thirty-three million of those Americans are receiving retirement benefits of the 48 million. So we have 33 million.

The President says do not worry about it. I say be very worried from what we know right now and what history speaks to as it relates to accurate information. Forty-eight percent of the 48 million that are receiving benefits right now, 48 percent of them would be under the poverty line if it was not for Social Security.

This is serious business. This is not if one likes the President or not. This is not a popularity contest. This is for real. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, under his plan, or under his philosophy, they will only receive 80 percent of what they have right now and they will only receive $516 a month. Under the plan right now, original Democratic plan, continuation in 1983, the bipartisan plan that was handed to the American people, as we stand right now, will be in force for the next 47 to 50 years, and then after that 80 percent of the benefits will be there for them. On average they get $955 a month. Imagine going from $955 a month down to $516 based on a privatization gamble.

Some Members say there are some Members that are emotional about this. They are right. I am emotional about it because I have constituents who woke up early one day on a Tuesday and went down and voted not only for me but for democracy and to make sure that their voice is heard in this Chamber. And I guarantee my colleagues, as long as I am a Member, as

well as the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) and I am pretty sure all of us, they are going to be represented. I do not care if they are Republican or Democrat or Independent or Green Party or what have you. Even if they do not have a voter registration card, it is important that we stand on their behalf.

So wrong is wrong and right and right. And I will tell my colleagues right now some Members on the majority side, especially the leadership, are dead wrong on this issue. And let us just talk a little bit about 1101 grass roots, what happens here within the rules of this House. If we were in the majority, and when I say ''we,'' mean Democrats, with our present leadership right now, if the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) was the Speaker of this House, the conversation would be a lot different. It would be about saving Social Security, continuing to save Social Security, a bipartisan plan, if that was the issue of the day, because the real crisis, going back to what the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) said, is we do not have health care. We have 46 million Americans working, not sitting at home cracking their toes saying the job situation looks sad. These are individuals that wake up every day and go to work that do not have health care insurance. And local communities are falling to their knees because public hospitals are going under, because the Federal Government is just not there.

For another 3, 3½ years, if left up to the mechanics of this House, if something does not change in the next election as it relates to leadership, look forward to having to pay through the nose for health care insurance. That is a crisis. And I have companies in my district now that are telling people that are coming for jobs, to apply for Medicaid, they get more benefits. Hello. Apply for Medicaid, they get more benefits? Because they cannot afford the premiums on the insurance. And meanwhile we are running around here talking about a pie-in-the-sky privatization plan that is risky at best, and we are asking Americans to gamble, and we are spending their money, telling them something that the polling has indicated and a number of Members in this Congress, especially on the Democratic side, have said it is just not going to work.

So this is something that we have to continue to work very hard on. Some people say why are we all talking about Social Security? It is our issue. It is an American issue. It is an issue that is facing every American. It is a $26,340.67 issue.

The baby who was just born when we started this Special Order here tonight already owes the Federal Government $26,000 and change, and climbing. So we have to put a stop to this, and we have to make sure that Americans fully understand that what they have right now in their wallet, the Social Security they have been writing down as their ID number when they went to school to better themselves, go to college, those that went into vocational trade school or what have you, vocational education school, Social Security is there and it is an American-produced program that the rest of the world envies. They envy this.

So in closing, before I yield to my colleagues, I am just going to say that this is extreme. I am going to use the word. It is extreme. It is extreme for people to say or for the leadership to say that private accounts are good, ''It is good for you and it is good for me.'' That is not true. It is extreme.

When folks are running around here saying we want to change the rules because we are not getting 110 percent of the judges to get confirmed through the other body there, that is extreme. And extremism is not going to help us come together as Americans. It is going to divide us. And I guarantee my colleagues this: I said it on this night, if I have got to stand by myself on it, the American people will make those individuals pay for being extreme. And I think the 109th Congress, unfortunately, will be remembered for taking extreme measures in a time when we should have been focusing on other issues such as health care, such as prescription drug care, such as making sure that our children are not in overcrowded classrooms and making sure that our teachers have what they need to be able to teach our future generations and small businesses are able to get loans to be able to keep our economy going. There are a number of issues, and I could go on and on and on, as my colleagues know.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a point. He mentioned dissent and debate, and we talked a little bit about it here tonight. This body has a constitutional obligation to voice our concerns and our opinions. And that is why the rules of the House are set up so that we can get an hour here to talk about it and voice our concerns and talk about what we believe and what our approach would be. And I think it is important that we do get out here, and I think the Democrats have done a great job, leaders in both Chambers have done a great job, of fulfilling our obligation to our constituents to go out there and at least recognize that the President's plan is not resonating, and that we have an obligation to go out there and be critical if we need to be and say that the plan is extreme and say the plan is radical.

I do not think there is anything wrong with that, because in 1994 and the years leading up, the other side was very critical of the President for a long while. They have gone back on what they said they were going to do in 1994, balanced budget amendments and balancing the budget, and this thing just keeps going up and up and up. So they obviously have not fulfilled some of their goals that they set, but they were critical of the President, and they had a right to do that, and they won the House back. And now they are overstepping. Now we are being critical. And I think the American people are going to see that the Democratic Party has something to offer.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

I think it is really safe to say that both of their remarks are cogent, and I think it is safe to say that we are really disturbed about the direction that this country is going in and the direction that the leadership is taking us. It is time to restore some balance.

We have got a Congress that sees nothing wrong with inserting itself in the midst of a private family tragedy a few weeks ago. Now they want to take Social Security, the most successful program that supports Americans throughout their retirement years, 70 years of success, they want to take it off the tracks. They want to yank the safety net out from under our retirees and under our generation. Because if the President is ensuring that people 55 and over are going to be okay, what is he saying to the rest of us? ''You may not be okay but I do not care.'' I mean that is a really foreboding message that he is sending to our generation.

And I tell the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) I do not think he has to worry about standing alone, because there were more than 3,000 people at that rally with us today, more than 100 Members of Congress, and it appears in the feedback we have gotten from across this country that we are standing together, not alone; that we have lots of people behind us and they are trying to send a very strong message to the leadership of this Congress and to the President that privatization needs to be dropped, that we need to stop talking about it, that we need to come to the table together and compromise, that we need to right the train.

And I am going to just take the privilege of my gender here for a couple of minutes, since I am the woman of the three of us, and just talk about the possibility of privatization's impact on women, because it is disproportionate. It really is. More than 40 years after the Equal Pay Act, women still only earn 76 cents on the dollar for what a man earns, 76 cents. One cannot save what they do not earn. This proposal will disproportionately impact women.

In fact, because of childbearing years and care for sick or elderly parents, on average, women are generally out of the work force for about 12 years. Older women are less likely than older men to receive pension income. Only about 28 percent of women compared to 43

percent of men have a pension. So when they do receive pensions, the benefit to women is only about half what a man will receive.

So what that boils down to is that when a woman received her Social Security retirement benefits in 2003, the average monthly benefit for a woman was only $798, which is about $241 less than the average man's monthly retirement.

What will happen to women, because we have got 20 percent of single women who are widowed, who are Social Security beneficiaries who are collecting Social Security today, about 20 percent of those women, the only source of their retirement income is Social Security?

We are just yanking out the security and the safety that we have guaranteed where we are going from a guaranteed benefit to a guaranteed gamble. And that is what the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) has been saying and leading us at the rally today and all the way leading up to today. We cannot shift the whole nature of Social Security from a guaranteed benefit to a guaranteed gamble. We have to keep the security in Social Security. That is the bottom line.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, no doubt about it. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), in fact, today was at Columbia University, New York City, 300 young people at 8:30 in the morning. College students, when that alarm goes off at 7 o'clock, 7:30 when they are in college, they hit that snooze button and they hope they make their 10 o'clock class. But there is so much concern here for this, and we know it is resonating.

And I think this group especially, since the gentlewoman from Florida joined us specifically, we have had more of an impact here, but I think we have seen the polls and the decline in support by young people for this kind of risky scheme, this risky proposal. And I think we will continue to see it because they recognize the fact that long term this is bad for them.

And one thing I would mention to the people that are watching at home, ask themselves is this legislative body, is this President addressing issues that face them day to day, affect their day-to-day life? Are we dealing with issues that will help them? And I think the answer is no. We are not dealing with oil, gas prices. We are not doing anything to try to find alternative energy sources. We are not doing anything to increase funding for Pell grants or No Child Left Behind. We are actually cutting benefits for veterans. If a veteran is sitting at home right now, their copay is going to go from $7 to $15, and there are going to be user fees assessed to them. All these things are happening. So if people are sitting at home and they are not involved or engaged in the political process at all, they have to ask themselves, ''What are they doing in Washington, D.C. that is going to help my life?'' And really nothing. We are talking about a manufactured crisis that is going to happen in 2042.

I want to read one quick e-mail. I know we have gotten hundreds of these, but I want to read one. This is from last week. ''My name is Susan Parker.'' Susan lives in Severna Park, Maryland. She is 33, becoming ever more involved in politics. A few weeks ago she watched the dynamic trio up here on C–SPAN discussing why the Bush administration's plan was not good for the citizens of the country.

''I was glued to the TV. I started taking notes, and from those notes I e-mailed letters to my Representative, Senators, and several letters to the editor. Thank you, thank you, thank you for the inspiration and for speaking out so consistently.''

□ 2145

So these young people are starting to get involved, engaged, writing.

Before I part ways, I am going to have this hanging in my office. This is ''Rock the Boat,'' the little coffee stand on it. ''I Love Social Security.'' You can go to rocktheboat.com and get some information, or e-mail us at 30-something Democrats at mail.house.gov, or go to the Web site, democraticleader.house.gov/30something. So this is it right here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am sure glad the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) shared his closing there, and also showed us his sign.

This is something I picked up today: ''Stop Privatization. Americans for Social Security.'' They have a Web site, dot com. It is actually good water.

Also, this sign here: ''Keep Your Hands Off of My Social Security.'' I think it is important. We know whose hands they are talking about, those who want to privatize, not our hands.

I also want to say thank you, because it is important. The reason why the polling numbers are what they are and Americans feel the way they are now, we want to thank the American Baptist Churches, USA, AFL–CIO, ACORN, Campaign For America's Future, Center For Budget Policy and Priorities, the Center For Economic Policy and Research, Children's Defense Fund, the Coalition of Human Needs, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, the Economic Policy Institute, the Labor Council of Latin American Advancement, the Consortium of Citizens With Disabilities, the League of Rural Voters, the League of United Latin American Citizens, Links, Inc., the NAACP, the National Committee To Preserve Social Security and Medicare, the National Congress of American Indians, the National Council of Churches, and I can go on and on and on.

They are the individuals out there, individual Americans, that have taken upon themselves to carry the fight on.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank both of these gentlemen. I am losing the prop board here, but I wanted to close by quoting the President. He said, ''Leadership means not passing problems on to future generations and future Presidents.''

This plan passes trillions of dollars of debt on to our children and our grandchildren, and it is time that we all exercise some leadership, come together and think about the direction that this country is going in, bring it back to the center, restore some balance, come to the table and compromise, and take privatizing Social Security off the table and not yank the safety net from under our constituents.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, that is what this is about. When the country goes in the wrong direction, the population, the population can shift it and move it in the right direction. That is what is happening here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to be with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) again. It is wonderful being with you all once again. We would like to thank the Democratic leadership, mainly the Democratic leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), for allowing us to be here.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHL of New York). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

INSTITUTING TORT REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise in this Chamber and discuss here tonight what has been a part of my life for my entire adult years, and that is the legal system of the United States, the attitudes of the American people about the legal system of the United States and where we are going in justice for America.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege and the honor to serve as a member of the judiciary for over 20 years of my life. I had the honor to appear before good judges and good juries for an additional about 12 years of my life. I am and have been a part of the legal system of the United States of America. I am a lawyer, I am proud to be a lawyer, and I feel I come from an honorable profession.

But it is also the duty of those of us who practice in a profession, whatever

that profession may be, when you see a problem that changes the direction of fairness and justice in America, you need to step up and say it is there. You should not let it hide under a box because you might make a little more honey. You need to step up and say, folks, in a certain area, we are starting to see the system be broke, and, if it is broke, we got to fix it.

Now, we are going to hear the term ''tort reform'' thrown around. I have a son that coaches back in Round Rock, and he said, You know, the first time I heard tort reform, I thought they were talking about bacon, because the average people need to know what we are talking about when we talk about tort reform.

We are talking about a part of the law which basically deals with personal injuries to people. It is a system of justice we have developed in this country to try to find out a way to try to compensate people who are injured by the negligence of others. It was the purpose to solve a problem.

Mr. Speaker, a courthouse, the courtroom, a battery of lawyers, is nothing more than a massive problem-solving area for America, and tort reform solves the problem of someone being injured through the actions of another or their negligence. To look to reform the system, we need to say, what is broken?

Many people in this Congress on both sides of the aisle, and many of my colleagues that I work with daily, would start by blaming the lawyers. I am not going to start by blaming the lawyers, although they certainly have a great amount of blame.

I start with blaming the American people, because we have become soft and decided, many of us think we should have a free ride. The great, huge, gigantic verdicts that are being supported by some juries in this country are another way of winning the lottery in the eyes of many of the American people, and they are just as responsible for administering justice when they sit on a jury as a judge is or a lawyer who sits in that courtroom.

So as we look at our system, we have to say, why do we see a $100 million verdict in a medical malpractice case when it is way beyond the imagination of anyone that that is what it takes to make that defendant whole from whatever injury that plaintiff has, that is what it takes from the defendant to make the plaintiff whole in that case? It is way beyond it.

Why did they award that $100 million verdict? It is my personal opinion they awarded that verdict because we have become a country that would like to get something for nothing, and they are willing to give a fellow citizen something for nothing.

As a juror takes his oath of office to serve as a trier of fact in a case, he should realize that his job there is to do justice. If the judge refuses to reform a verdict, it is his job to do justice.

So as we start seeing these things in our system, we start saying to ourselves, those of us in the legislative branch of government start saying, well, wait a minute. We see these problems. Are there ways we can look to make it better so really justice is done, so really the purpose for the courtroom is well displayed by the verdict of the jury and the rulings of the court? And that is why this has now become a point in time where this society sues more people than the entire rest of the world put together by about 15 times. We are out of control in our lawsuits. The average jury award is now about $3.5 million, up more than 70 percent since 1995.

So let us look and see who has come up with an idea that might help us address tort reform, help us work on this.

The first area we have already once passed through this House is medical malpractice. I am happy to see that my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS), one of the practicing doctors who is now a Member of this august body, has joined me in the House. I am honored to have him here; and if he has the time, I would love for him to join me and talk a little bit about medical malpractice.

One of the things you have got to think about is that young doctor that just graduated from school, and I will use Texas because I happen to know Texas, maybe UT or Baylor or Texas Tech or A&M medical school, SMU, someplace they are putting out good doctors. This young man wants to go back to a small town and practice medicine, and he wants to do it because he wants to make a decent living and help people stay healthy. So he may want to go into the family practice of medicine.

He may want to deliver babies as part of that family practice of medicine because he loves children; and it is one of the things he loves, bringing life into this world.

Today we have to tell that young doctor that, first off, you paid for all your medical school, probably with money he had to borrow from student loans, you are going to have to pay that back, but you are also going to have to get ready to kick in about $70,000 to $100,000. I would say your first $70,000 to $100,000 you make in the practice of medicine you are going to have to go to pay for liability insurance to make sure that you are protected.

That may be a low number. I am sure that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) could tell us numbers that far exceed that in some specialties where people have to go out and get that insurance. That means when you open the door, you could be $100,000 in the hole for the first year of practice, and the first time something does not go the way somebody would like it, there you are facing a lawsuit.

Now, seven out of 10 medical malpractice lawsuits filed in the United States have been proven to be frivolous; and many of these lawsuits, unfortunately, because of the nature and the fear of the large verdicts in our system, get settled even though they are frivolous, which causes what? The cost of the insurance to go up, not only for the individual, but for the body and for the specialty.

There are places in this country right now where you are not going to find a neurosurgeon on staff because the cost of being a neurosurgeon is just prohibitive. People in the Valley of the Rio Grande of Texas, one of the poorest regions in the entire Nation, it is difficult to find a doctor who will deliver a baby. There are stories upon stories of women arriving at their doctor's office to learn that the cost of their medical malpractice insurance has put them out of the baby-delivering business. That woman is about to have a baby. She is faced with driving 80 or 90 miles to San Antonio just to find a doctor to make sure that baby is going to be delivered by a doctor, if she can get one.

Mr. Speaker, this is a crisis, and it is a crisis that calls upon us who are in the legislative body to start coming up with solutions. I think that the vision that we have for following the California plan, which has shown that setting certain limits on awards, will assist us, and driving down the cost is important. So that is one area.

We talked a lot about this over the last year, and I wanted to touch on it, because that is where we start and that is where we are starting. There is a book, I believe it is Mr. Grisham wrote this book, called ''The King of Torts.'' It is a novel, but it certainly is based upon some historical facts in this country about these class-action lawsuits.

This session of Congress we did something about class-action lawsuits, this House did and the Senate did; and I am very hopeful we have got class-action lawsuits put where they ought to be. Because what was happening is these lawyers were putting together these large classes of people.

Mr. Speaker, I told you, I highly respect the legal profession. I am not here to blast lawyers. But just because I respect the profession does not mean there are not people that in my opinion that I do not hold in high esteem. Some of these are those who would gather a class from thousands to hundreds of thousands of people in a class, and their victory is they get a certificate for a 20 percent discount and the lawyer gets $100 million.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the right system; and I think, quite frankly, the lawyers that do that ought to be ashamed of themselves, because the system is designed to make whole those who are injured. Yet they forum-shop the Nation looking for these areas where clearly there were some courts who favored these types of actions.

Now, we have put together a system which we feel is very good to put it in the right place, because these things cross State lines. They span the entire

Nation and territories of the United States.

□ 2200

Yet, they could go forum shopping in one individual jurisdiction to get better results.

So, in order to stop this forum shopping, we have put together the Class Action Fairness Act which was signed into public law February 18 of this year. It will help unclog overclogged courts, it ends the harassment of local business by forum shopping, and it protects the consumers with the Consumers Action Bill of Rights that requires judges to carefully review the settlements and limits of the attorneys fees when the value of the settlement received by a class member is minor in comparison with the net loss of the settlement claim and the resulting attorneys fees therefrom. It bans settlements that award some class members a larger recovery than others. It allows the Federal courts to maximize the benefit of class action settlements by requiring that unclaimed settlement funds be donated to charitable organizations.

Now, this is a good start, and we are going to have, hopefully, before this session of Congress is over, before the 109th Congress goes to bed, we are going to have more good starts.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that my goal, and I think the goal of all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, is to make sure that our legal system, the system that we are so proud of, the fact that we stand in this Chamber day in and day out and talk about the rule of law, because we are proud that we are a nation ruled by the rule of law, that what we are trying to do is make the rule of law work better. The rule of law is not a Las Vegas slot machine. The rule of law is getting justice to every individual that breathes air in this great Nation of the United States of America, and justice means fairness to all.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing in our court system today a trend that, quite frankly, frightens me. It frightens me because people do not go to court to address grievances; they go to court to punish somebody. They go to court to hurt somebody or to make somebody bow down to their will. Mr. Speaker, that is the climate we have, and we have to start working on it.

I would like at this time to yield to the gentleman from north Texas (Mr. BURGESS), my colleague who is very knowledgeable on the subject of what this is doing to our doctors and our medical profession and our cost of medicine. I am honored that the gentleman is here to join me in this conversation.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding. I heard the gentleman speaking and I felt compelled to come down here and talk on this subject a little bit. I am so grateful that the gentleman has talked about one of the successes that we have had in this Congress, which is the Class Action Fairness bill, a bill that was signed into law by the President last month.

There is no question we can talk about the injuries and the grievance situation, we can talk about it all day and all night, but that does not do the American people any good. The American people need to see results, and I believe with that bill, we have done a great deal towards reestablishing our country, the greatest work force in the world, as being competitive with other people in other countries. We heard a lot about outsourcing during the last election, how we are going to stop outsourcing. Well, one of the things we can do to stop it is to stop making a climate that is prohibitive for business in this country, and I believe our Class Action Fairness bill was a big step in the right direction to do that.

We have also had some other successes as far as the fairness of the medical liability system in this country. My colleague already alluded to the Medical Compensation Reform Act of 1975 from California, but our own State, Texas, passed a very sweeping medical liability reform law in the last legislative session, 2 years ago. It required a constitutional amendment in the State of Texas to become law, which passed September 12 of 2003, and really what I would like to talk about is the success that we have seen in Texas since the passage of that constitutional amendment.

Now, 10 years ago, when I was just a simple country doctor, if someone had asked me, gee, doctor, what do you think we should do about the medical liability problem, the medical liability crisis; and, mind you, the medical liability crisis, it goes back a number of years. When I was in medical school in 1975, it was a crisis. And we thought we had solved the problem then, but, in reality we had only postponed it for a little while, and it reemerged in the 1980s. We thought we solved it for a little while then, but we did not, and it reemerged in the late 1990s to be the true crisis situation that occurred in the State of Texas in 2002.

But if someone had asked me back in the years right out of medical school what I would prefer to see as something that would restore fairness to the medical justice system, I would have said a system of an alternative dispute resolution-type of program where you would have a medical panel that someone would have to go through before they could go to court. I would have a very idealized no-fault system. The reality is, we cannot get there.

So do I love caps? No, not necessarily, but they work. And since they work and since the crisis is present in this country; and if you do not believe me, if you live in Maryland, ask your doctor the next time you go in to see him or her. If you live in Pennsylvania, ask your doctor the next time you go in to see him or her. If you live in New Jersey, good luck, because you probably will not be able to go in and see your doctor, because they have come to Texas, because we have done such a good job of fixing the liability problem in our State.

The central piece of that was, of course, a cap of noneconomic damages, a $250,000 cap of noneconomic damages against the physician, and a $250,000 cap against the hospital, and then another $250,000 cap against a second hospital or a nursing home, if there is one involved, for a total cap of $750,000.

Now, I did not know if that would work. That seemed almost a little too generous. The California law that was passed in 1975 worked, but they set a single cap of $250,000.

What has happened in Texas since 2003 when that constitutional amendment was passed? Well, one of the unintended consequences was hospitals have really enjoyed a significant benefit from the passage of that law. Texas hospitals are reporting a 17 percent decrease in professional liability premiums for 2004–2005. This is from a Texas Hospital Association survey with responses from 172 acute care hospitals. In 2003, before the law passed, the premiums had risen more than 50 percent.

This is one of the big things. This is one of the big wins of this law. New carriers are seeking entry into the Texas market. The Texas Department of Insurance report from August 5, 2004 and the largest carrier, Texas Medical Liability Trust, has reduced physician rates 12 percent. In the years prior to medical liability reform, 13 carriers left the State and 6,000 physicians had to scramble for coverage. Now, 6,000 physicians, that is a big number. You run across one doctor who has had that happen to them, and that is a significant blow to their livelihood and their career plans.

When I was campaigning in 2002, I met a young woman who was a radiologist. She was probably in her early forties, and she came up to me at an event and said, boy, I hope you get something done with medical liability reform next year because my carrier left the State and I cannot buy insurance. And I thought, well, you must have had some trouble along the way. And she offered, before I even had the chance to speculate about it, I have never been sued, but my carrier left the State. She cannot get insurance. She is not going to practice as a radiologist without insurance and put all of her personal assets at risk.

So, as a consequence, here this young woman, 42 years of age, at the peak of her power as a physician, if you will, trained at the University of Texas at San Antonio, so trained with a State-subsidized education, the people of Texas had paid for her training; the people of Texas are now denied her abilities, her capabilities as a professional because she cannot get insurance and, as a consequence, cannot practice radiology, because the profession of radiology is just too fraught with peril to practice without insurance.

Well, another insurance writer, Texas Health Care Indemnity, reduced their rates by 20 percent in Texas. Again, these are hospital insurance rates that have been reduced because the doctors in Texas did something to try to get ahold of medical liability reform.

The filings themselves, the actual lawsuits filed have decreased. Medical liability lawsuits in several counties considered high-risk for physicians have decreased since the new law took effect in 2003. For Harris County, 105 lawsuits were filed from September of 2003 to July of 2004, compared with 746 lawsuits filed in the 3 months prior to the passage of the constitutional amendment. In Bandera County, the county where San Antonio is, 81 lawsuits were filed between September 1, 2003 and April of 2004, compared with 304 lawsuits filed in the 3 months before the constitutional amendment was passed. Nueces County, 32 compared with 108. Cameron County, 17 compared with 28; Hidalgo County, 17 lawsuits in the year after reform, 96 lawsuits in the 3 months prior to reform.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is no question that caps have been the good-news story in Texas, and that is why I embrace the legislation that we will do in this House this year that will have as its central feature a cap on noneconomic damages.

Does this keep someone out of the courthouse? Absolutely not. If someone is harmed by the system, they are able to recover all of the economic damages to which they are entitled. And the reality is in Texas, we are going to limit damages for pain and suffering to $750,000, which still is a significant amount of money when you consider it in the total amount of filed litigation.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, and with the gentleman from Texas's permission, I will yield back, but I will remain around if the gentleman has any other questions that he would like to ask of me.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have a little conversation with the gentleman. The gentleman is right. It is very important to make the point that those people that should be at the courthouse addressing genuine harm are still getting to the courthouse and having that harm addressed. It is not cutting off the need of people to recover in the courthouse; it is cutting off these frivolous attacks to try to reach the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow by limiting the pot of gold, and we clearly can see what happened: Get them all in before the deadline so that we can win the lottery. After that, we are just going to get paid for our work.

Mr. BURGESS. Apparently so.

Mr. CARTER. It is a whole lot more fun to dream about winning the lottery. I mean, obviously, the whole country dreams almost every third night in this country about winning the lottery someplace; not very many of them that win it, but they are out there dreaming it. But the real crime of winning the lottery when we are talking about lawsuits is the fear of that big judgment that causes people to settle lawsuits that should not be settled to prevent the danger of that unlimited liability that is out there before caps were placed in the law. The gentleman knows there is nothing that irritates doctors more, and I have talked to doctors about this; they say, they made me settle the lawsuit but, by golly, I did not do anything wrong.

Mr. BURGESS. The gentleman is absolutely correct. If the gentleman will yield, the cost of continuing the lawsuit in both dollar terms and emotional terms is sometimes just simply too high, and the better part of valor is to settle. Fortunately, I lived in a county where juries were a little more favorable to physicians, but we all know of other counties within the State of Texas where that was not the case. There is no question that cases were settled simply because it was easier than continuing the pain and agony of continuing the lawsuit.

Mr. CARTER. And I too lived in such a county and presided over such a court. Our Williamson County jurors, they, when you start talking about $1 million, there is not that much money in the world as far as they are concerned, so they were very tight with their money and, therefore, you saw very few people; if you could file that lawsuit someplace else, they were not filing it in Williamson County, because they were seeking that pot of gold.

Mr. BURGESS. But again, the biggest problem is access. If we drive our good physicians out of practice, if we prevent our best and brightest from entering the practice of medicine, and there is evidence that that is happening, I fail to see how we are furthering the cause of patient safety by keeping the best and brightest out of medicine. I fail to see how we are furthering the cause of patient safety by preventing smaller towns from having access to perhaps an anesthesiologist or perhaps a cardiologist simply because they cannot afford the liability premiums to have them there.

□ 2215

Now, the gentleman knows I have been around a while. I have had four children. When my first couple of children were born, a lot of the procedures that you OB-GYNs do on a regular basis. And I am glad to see we are joined by another one of our doctors here in Congress, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY). So we will just have this conversation be three-way.

When my first two kids were born, I do not even know the terminology, but when they scanned the baby on your tummy, that was brand new. The piercing to check the fluid was brand new. They did not do that as a regular course. They did not run those tests as a regular course with my first two children. With my last two children they did, and it was a blessing for our family because we had a crisis pregnancy at one time.

But my point now is that a doctor, because of the potential of the liability, is afraid not to do those procedures. Is there some truth to that? Does the gentleman agree that there is some truth to that?

Mr. GINGREY. If the gentleman will yield, I do. And the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER), the good judge, is kind to yield to me. I actually came to the well for another purpose, but since you asked me my opinion on this, I will be glad to opine.

By the way, that piercing of the abdomen to get the fluid, that is called amniocentesis.

Mr. CARTER. That is it. That is why I went to law school and not medical school.

Mr. GINGREY. Now, do not ask me to spell that for you.

But, Mr. Speaker, absolutely. What the gentleman from Texas, both the gentlemen from Texas, I should say, are absolutely right. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) earlier was talking about the number of physicians, that before this good legislation was passed by the great State of Texas, it was 600 or so. And it is really, as I have said this many times, it is not just that the physician loses his or her livelihood that they have worked most of their adult life to establish. But it is a jobs situation, because every time a medical office closes because of the burdensome expense of malpractice insurance, you are talking about putting maybe 15, 25, possibly as many as 50 employees of that medical practice, Mr. Speaker. That is how many were employed in my practice as an OB-GYN in Georgia.

And I really commend Texas in regard to their legislation. I think it was a model, Mr. Speaker, for my State of Georgia in the general assembly, and the State of Georgia this year did pass reform legislation very similar to the Texas bill. And I think that they have now got a couple of years' experience, so hopefully that same thing will occur in the State of Georgia.

So I really appreciate the gentleman yielding and giving me an opportunity to weigh in on this.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time. And I once again thank my colleague from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) for being here with me tonight. I rose when I first started talking to tell you that there is, in my opinion, an attitude crisis for the justice system in America. We have talked about medical malpractice, and we have gone forward on the crusade. And I think we are getting some results. And the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) has very clearly described how we are seeing those results in the State of Texas today. Hopefully, with the work this Congress will do, we will be able to find that same success in the area of dealing with medical issues in the courthouse, to put more fairness back in the system; and that our class action reform, I think, is putting fairness back in the system.

But it is a bigger picture than that, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of issues we really need to talk about as we talk about lawsuit reform in America. One of the real tragedies that you see in the courthouse today is people using our courts, not to redress grievances, but as a battering ram of costs to destroy competition with those that they are in business in competition against, or using it to try to change, make somebody do something they do not want to do by costing them enough medical costs, I mean, lawyer costs they cannot afford to go to court.

So you just continue to file lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit, many of which could be frivolous; but you must defend yourself. And you must be insured to defend yourself. It is getting epidemic. And if you do not think it is epidemic, let us think about the world we are in today, the world of politics in America. Do you think our Founding Fathers ever anticipated that at the end of an election cycle parties would have 50 lawyers on retainer ready to go to court on both sides with both parties?

Do you think that that is the system that we thought that we wanted to have in this country, America? And yet we seem to be there today. I am not taking the sides of whether you like or do not like how elections come out. But when did it become everybody goes to court? When did this have to happen?

I mean, our Founding Fathers trusted the American people to elect their representatives. Did they design a system where judges rule the country? I do not think so. If they had had that system, they would have kept the King, and old George would still be around here. No, the purpose of the American justice system is justice. It is fairness, it is a place to seek recourse when there is no other place for recourse and to get a fair judgment.

Now it has become a weapon of politics. It has become a weapon of business; it has become a weapon to make school boards change policies. It has become a weapon to make city counsels shut down parks or take down symbols. We have gotten to a point where we are letting the courthouse drive everything.

Mr. Speaker, we love our rights in this country. We love to be a Nation that stands up for its rights. My problem is, with rights come responsibilities. And there are times in this life when you are responsible and you have to stand up and recognize I am responsible here. I do not need to sue somebody. If I do not like the way my neighbor cuts his yard, why in the world do I have to drag him into court and make him spend $100,000 on lawyers to make him cross-cut his yard instead of parallel cut it? And yet there are people who do that.

I tried a lawsuit between whose cat and whose dog was doing their business in whose yard. And those people spent $60,000 a piece on lawyers. Mr. Speaker, that is unreasonable. That is ridiculous.

But we have reached a point in America today where we have become so lawsuit crazy and we think we can get something for nothing, they are willing to force somebody to do something that they do not want to do by forcing them to spend their money on lawyers.

It is not the lawyers' fault. They are just getting paid for their hourly wage. It is our attitude in this country. And as we start to show people how we can redirect and make things better, the gentleman from Georgia hit right on it. Not only as these judgments come down in the courtroom does it affect the individuals in the courtroom. The periphery around those individuals, it affects jobs, it affects businesses, it affects the availability of services, the availability of goods, our ability to compete worldwide, to be part of this great ever-growing world community. It affects everything that affects every American citizen by the fact that we are driving up legal costs and using our courts as a weapon.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to do something to change this attitude. I am very blessed right now in Congress to have a multiple of my colleagues from Texas now Members of Congress, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), who is here with us today. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is also a new Member of Congress, and I am very honored to have both of these fine judges with me.

We have talked. We talk about what happens in our courtroom, what happens in our courthouse. And we see that there is an attitude in America that has got to be changed. And we do this by, I think, by doing what we are doing right now. Let us start taking the real problem areas, let us start analyzing them. Let us start coming up with a commonsense approach of how we are going to make sure that we are not in the business of making people rich. We are in the business of making people whole. We are in the business of making people right for the injury that occurred. And common sense will hopefully cause us to start to see that what our American court system is about is justice. And if it is not about justice, then it is going about things all wrong.

Mr. Speaker, every day now in the newspaper we see somebody using the courts or somebody using accusations without convictions to harm and punish people in this country, and in this body. Mr. Speaker, that is wrong. That is not what our Founding Fathers intended.

Our Founding Fathers told us that people are innocent until proven guilty. They told us we have a series of courts that are to provide justice and a resolution of disputes, not a battering ram to pound your opponent into submission. And this is the kind of thing that, as we look at the future of the American justice system, we have to do this.

Now, when I get the chance to come up here and talk about lawsuit reform, there is one more thing we ought to talk about. And I may change the subject just so I can get my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), to step up to the podium. I am going to yield to him right now, and then I am going to come back and talk to you a little bit about what is going on over in the Senate and checks and balances on the judiciary. But first, I thank the gentleman from Texas for coming up here this late hour and joining me. I am proud to have him here, as I said before.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I am very honored to be here in the same body with him. He is a well-respected and well-thought-of jurist sitting in Georgetown, Texas, from Round Rock, Texas, home of the yellow doughnut. But it is an honor to serve with you and with somebody that understands the triparteid system of government and the checks and balances. I know when I was at Texas A&M in undergrad, and it looked like I would not be going to Vietnam, it was ending before I graduated, I was looking at going to law school and my dad was concerned about that. And I used to get clippings every weekend, talked about there are too many lawyers in the country, and what is wrong with America are the lawyers, and lawyers are crooks and that kind of thing. And I really had to do a lot of soul searching about whether law school was something I wanted to do.

And what I came to the conclusion of was that, really, the law is a tool. It is like a hammer. You can use it constructively to build great things, or you can use it to tear down the greatest things. And that was all in whose hand that tool resided. And I ended up endeavoring to do just that, to use the tool and try to use it constructively.

But then, as the gentleman has pointed out, we have seen around the country so many abuses. I was just in Spokane, Washington, and talking to people in eastern Washington Friday and Saturday and was hearing how desperate they were for some certain physicians and specialists in the eastern part of Washington, that many of them were having to travel over to Idaho, some parts of Texas that has become a real problem.

And it is a shame it arises out of some of the abuses that have occurred. You and I know that there are excellent defense lawyers. There are excellent plaintiffs' attorneys and the courts are a very necessary part of our triparteid system where we can come, no matter what is going on outside the courthouse, we can come sit down and each side gets a turn, each side puts on their case, puts on evidence, each side has a chance for mutual arguments and then have a determination in a fair civil manner from objective people, and that is a great system. It is not a perfect system, because unfortunately it deals with people. But it is the best system that has ever been generated for resolving disputes.

But because of some of the abuses, I have been looking for solutions. We know, I have seen for example, many doctors brought in to a lawsuit and maybe there was one person at fault, but then all these other people got brought in, and then person after person who is a defendant gets dropped from the lawsuit.

□ 2230

I had one doctor standing in my courtroom when I announced that the plaintiffs had dismissed her and she said, That is it? I am dismissed? What about my pain and suffering? What about a year's loss I have had? What about my attorneys fees? What about my liability insurance going through the roof? All of these things have happened and there is no recourse.

So one of the things that I thought that would help level the playing field, and I am open to any ideas, and we hear talk about caps, this, that and the other, but it seems like a system where there was a provision for a loser to pay, if there is no finding of fault or no agreement among the parties, that that could go a long way toward leveling the playing field.

Now, I have heard people from the other side who said, but you do not understand the games that get played on the defense side. I have seen the games that get played on the defense side. I had one lawsuit that involved thousands of plaintiffs, and originally there were hundreds of defendants in it. After I had come into the suit, within a matter of months I dismissed a whole slew of defendants. A couple of defense attorneys told me, wow, Judge, this has been going on 11 years. You just came in here and all of the sudden dismissed a bunch of defendants. We are proud of you. It is good for our clients but we do not know what we will do. One of them said, I put my kids through college and law school on this case as a defense attorney. I kind of hate to see it go away for my clients because I was making money.

There are abuses on both sides. One of the thoughts I had was to answer the cry if you had a strict loser-pay situation that it would make people reluctant to bring all the parties in to a suit initially. And if they did not do that, then you get past the statute of limitations period and then all the defendants turn and point to somebody who is outside the lawsuit, saying he is responsible, and it is too late to go get him.

We know also there have been abuses where parties are brought in just so discovery can be done, depositions be taken free of charge and then drop them. That is a form of abuse as well. My thought was perhaps have a loser-pay type situation, and if it gets beyond the limitations and parties in the lawsuit, point to somebody outside the lawsuit, then extend the limitations for 30 days to bring in a party that they are now all pointing to so that that would take care of that situation.

I am looking for solutions because there are a lot of people that are getting hurt, a lot of people that have been abused; but at the same time we need to protect the system so that real legitimate claims can have a resolution.

If the gentleman would allow me to mention one other aspect of this that he has been talking on so eloquently, of course I love the way a fellow Texan talks such as the gentleman, but I have noticed an effect in the schools.

My mother passed away in 1991 but she was a teacher, eighth grade English teacher most of her adult life, and my sister had been a school teacher for nearly 30 years. My wife had been a school teacher until we got to needing her so desperately full time in our campaign in Congress. But what I was seeing more and more of was this fear of being abused by a lawsuit by educators, by teachers and sometimes teachers have enough. They have a problem student. They take him to an administrator and an administrator says, I realize this person is completely disrupting your class but their parents keep threatening a lawsuit and we cannot afford that. So if you just get by and do the best we can and we will get past the lawsuit and probably somebody else's. And it seems like it has been a complete disruption to orderly discipline in our schools.

One of the thoughts, here again, I am trying to think outside of the box and think creatively, but as judges we had something called judicial immunity. You may not like the way a judge rules, but if he is not committing a crime and he is acting within the purview of his job, trying to do what is right, trying to make the right decision, you are not going to file a lawsuit against him. And if you do, it will be thrown out and probably sanctioned because the judge has judicial immunity.

I thought it might be fair to help education by extending that doctrine to the area of education. You may be making a decision that is not very wise as an administrator and an educational facility, you may be a teacher that does not make wise decisions, and that is the basis for going to the school board and getting you fired. That is a reason to go to the school board and have a principal or someone else fired, but it is not a basis to run and file a lawsuit and go to court. So that educators can feel more comfortable in doing a job.

Yes, they are accountable through the legislative branch, but let us do not make it a habit to run down and file lawsuits. I think we could set the schools back on track and a long way toward proper discipline if we extended that type of educational immunity to teachers and administrators. As long as you are not committing a crime, you are acting within the purview of your job, let us give you a break.

The gentleman has discussed so eloquently this mindset, this America, everything is someone else's fault. And once we can help people get beyond that notion and force them to try to resolve things among themselves, mediation, arbitration, these type of things have been very helpful in the alternative dispute resolution, trying to avoid the lengthy attorney fees and court costs.

We were in Spokane hearing testimony about environmental laws. We had boxes stacked up over my head. As I understood it, it was over a little more than 2-mile stretch of road, and the appeals and things that have just gone on and on have been crazy, the trees that have been cut down just to allow that kind of abuse of the system. By the same token, I was shown a graph that showed that since 1970, the bar graph year by year, that lawsuits have continued to escalate, and with each year as the lawsuits escalated the board-feet of lumber we had produced had gone the other way, directly proportional the other way.

So we see the destructive tendency. That is a renewable resource. We ought to be able to do better than that. But the courts have been used, as the gentleman said, to batter others. As Shakespeare said, The problem may not be in our stars but in ourselves.

Some people blame the lawyers but the fact is no lawyer can file a lawsuit without a client. No lawyer can defend a lawsuit without a client. The problem may be bigger than just lawyers. It may be not in our stars, not in our lawyers, but all part of the same problem.

I appreciate the gentleman addressing this so well tonight.

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I want to say a statement the gentleman made, I want to emphasize how important it is to me and I think it is important to every Member of this House. That is, men of good will always look for solutions.

We do not always have the right ideas, but if you do not lay proposed solutions on the table for a free debate among men of good will and women of good will in this august Chamber, we will not come up with a solution.

I believe the American people are ready, willing, and able to listen to a debate from the United States Congress about the things that we are talking about here today; and that is what is wrong, how do we change our attitude towards the law, towards our rights and towards our responsibilities? What little things can we do to adjust, to help guide us down the path that I think our forefathers clearly intended for us when we designed the system, which, for all its fault, as the gentleman pointed out, is still the best system ever devised by man?

I am not ashamed of it, and I am not ashamed of lawyers, and I am not ashamed of our system. But I think we must be men of good will and women of good will who seek solutions.

Finally, I am going to just briefly pause. This will be the subject of a whole other talk, but we have got the

issue that the press has decided to address as ''the nuclear option'' which is going on over in the Senate by dealing with the Senate rules and how we are going to get an up-or-down vote on judges.

We love to address, and rightfully so, the Constitution of the United States as we discuss things on this floor. And we love to talk about the checks and balances in our government. And in a judiciary appointed for life as we designed in our system, you have to look into the Constitution and see where the checks and balances are. And I think clearly our framers designed the number one check and balance on the judiciary to be the fact that there will be a new process at least every 8 years now, but certainly 4 to 8 years, who will appoint different types of people to serve in our judiciary which will give a good cross-section of a blend of attitudes, views of the law to our judicial system, to give a system that spreads fairness for all citizens.

To use procedural rules to prevent that appointment power which calls for the advice and consent of Senate, to prevent that using procedural rules, I think it is not a nuclear option, as we are discussing, it is a constitutional option.

If we are not going to allow that check and balance to operate, then where will the checks and balances be? So this will be a subject of another discussion another time. But at this time, I just want to remind the American people as the rhetoric in the papers and on the TV and the radio, remember it is the best justice system in the world. But it is the best because we had some people who sweated blood, sweat, and tears in Philadelphia to come up with a plan that set balance to our system. And the number one balance to a judicial system appointed for life is the opportunity for the executive branch, through the President, to nominate new blood to our judiciary through every Presidential term.

Some of that new blood will be just exactly what they think it will be with their views, and some of it will not. And we are always surprised to hear from our commentators: Well, it is true, but that judge was appointed by Reagan.

That's right, that is how the system works. You put the new blood out there, that blood develops into a justice system, that spreads it out for everybody. And some of them, some people go the way everybody expects them to be and some people do not.

When Eisenhower appointed Earl Warren, nobody anticipated the activist court that would come from the Warren court. And yet historically it is one of the most activist courts in America. So that system works. Why be afraid of it?

I would urge everyone to look at this issue and let the Senate think just for a second, get the politics out of this for a minute and say, What did our Founding Fathers see here? That we had a system that works if we just let it work.

Let us have a vote, up or down, on every nomination that the President has proposed; and when their President gets in there, if he ever does, we should do the same thing for them. That is what our Founding Fathers proposed.

Madam Speaker, I have enjoyed being with you this evening and I am very honored that my colleagues were able to see me ranting and raving and come over here and help me out. Of course, you know one thing you can count on from Texans and Georgians is when there is a call to arms they always show up. So I am proud to see my colleagues from Texas come out and join me in this discussion, and I am very proud to have my colleague from Georgia join me. I thank them all for being here with me tonight.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for your patience in listening to me tonight and for joining us and coming up with those solutions that men and women of good will can submit to this body and hopefully make America better.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 22, EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THAT AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESSES ARE ENTITLED TO A SMALL BUSINESS BILL OF RIGHTS.

Mr. GINGREY (during the Special Order of Mr. CARTER), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–55) on the resolution (H. Res. 235) providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 22) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that American small businesses are entitled to a Small Business Bill of Rights, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 748, CHILD INTERSTATE ABORTION NOTIFICATION ACT

Mr. GINGREY (during the Special Order of Mr. CARTER), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–56) on the resolution (H. Res. 236) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 748) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent the transportation of minors in circumvention of certain laws relating to abortion, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. HOOLEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of a family issue.

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. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KIND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. DAVIS of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HENSARLING, for 5 minutes, today and April 27.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today and April 27.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and April 27 and 28.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PORTMAN, for 5 minutes, April 27 and 28.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, April 27, 28, and May 3.

Mr. ROHRABACHER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, April 28.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, May 3 and 4.

Mr. MCHENRY, for 5 minutes, April 27 and 28.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MOLLOHAN, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 893. An act to make technical corrections in the Anabolic Steroid Control Act of 2004, to the Committee on Energy and Commerce; in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary 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.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 27, 2005, 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:

1728. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Extension of Test Program for Negotiation of Comprehensive Small Business Subcontracting Plans [DFARS Case 2004-D029] received April 25, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1729. A letter from the Publications Control Officer, Department of the Army, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Law Enforcement Reporting (RIN: 0702-AA42-U) received February 28, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1730. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Bonds [DFARS Case 2003-D033] received February 28, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1731. A letter from the Senior Paralegal (Regulations), Office of Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Proper Disposal of Consumer Information Under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act of 2003 [No. 2004-56] (RIN: 1550-AB87); Department of the Treasury, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency [Docket No. 04-13] (RIN: 1557-AC84); Federal Reserve System [Docket No. R-1199]; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (RIN: 3064-AC77) received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1732. A letter from the Regulatory Specialist, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Community Reinvestment Act Regulations [Docket No. 05-06] (RIN: 1557-AC86); Department of the Treasury, Office of Thrift Supervision [No. 2005-06] (RIN: 1550-AB91); Federal Reserve System [Regulation BB; Docket No. R-1205]; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (RIN: 3064-AC82) received April 1, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

1733. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CDC, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Possession, Use, and Transfer of Select Agents and Toxins (RIN: 0920-AA09) received March 18, 2005, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

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. SENSENBRENNER: Committee on the Judiciary. House Resolution 210. Resolution supporting the goals of World Intellectual Property Day, and recognizing the importance of intellectual property in the United States and worldwide (Rept. 109–53). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. NEY: Committee on House Administration. House Resolution 224. Resolution providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Ninth Congress; with an amendment (Rept. 109–54). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mrs. CAPITO: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 235. Resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 22) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that American small businesses are entitled to a Small Business Bill of Rights (Rept. 109–55). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GINGREY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 236. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 748) to amend title 18, United States Code, to prevent the transportation of minors in circumvention of certain laws relating to abortion, and for other purposes (Rept. 109–56). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1813. A bill to require the payment of interest on amounts owed by the United States pursuant to the reliquidation of certain entries under the Tariff Suspension and Trade Act of 2000 and the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2004; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. OTTER, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mrs. BONO, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. BERRY, Mr. HERGER, Mr. CLAY, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LEACH, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. FARR, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. OSBORNE, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin, Mr. ROSS, Mr. SHAYS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. TIBERI, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. TANNER, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Mr. BASS):

H.R. 1814. A bill to allow travel between the United States and Cuba; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. HUNTER (for himself and Mr. SKELTON) (both by request):

H.R. 1815. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2006, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. KING of Iowa (for himself, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. PAUL, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. WICKER, Mr. MCHENRY, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 1816. A bill to amend the National Labor Relations Act to protect employer rights; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. COX:

H.R. 1817. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for the Department of Homeland Security, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security.

By Mr. OBERSTAR (for himself, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. RAHALL, Mr. BOSWELL, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. NORTON, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. HOLDEN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. WEINER, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. HONDA, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. CARNAHAN):

H.R. 1818. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to make funds available for the Aviation Security Capital Fund, to establish a Checkpoint Screening Security Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 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. WELLER:

H.R. 1819. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to enhance the access of Medicare beneficiaries who live in medically underserved areas to critical primary and preventive health care benefits at Federally qualified health centers; 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. WELLER (for himself and Mrs. BIGGERT):

H.R. 1820. A bill to amend the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor Act of 1984 to help ensure the appropriate transition of the management entity of the heritage corridor, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. GOODLATTE (for himself, Mr. GOODE, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. BOUCHER, and Mrs. DRAKE):

H.R. 1821. A bill to provide States that meet certain requirements with waivers of the adequate yearly progress provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. BONO (for herself, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. BASS):

H.R. 1822. A bill to prohibit human cloning and protect stem cell research; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ANDREWS (for himself and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas):

H.R. 1823. A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend the provisions governing nonimmigrant status for spouses and children of permanent resident aliens awaiting the availability of an immigrant visa, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 1824. A bill to provide for the duty-free entry of certain tramway cars and associated spare parts for use by the city of Portland, Oregon; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. BUTTERFIELD:

H.R. 1825. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income the first $5,000 of each transitional payments under the Fair and Equitable Tobacco Reform Act of 2004; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARDIN:

H.R. 1826. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on 2-Chlorobenzyl chloride; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARDIN:

H.R. 1827. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on (Z)-(1RS,3RS)-3-(2-Chloro-3,3,3-trifluro-1-propenyl)-2,2-imethylcyclopropanecarboxylic acid; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CARDIN:

H.R. 1828. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on (S)-Alpha-Hydroxy-3-

phenoxybenzeneacetonitrile; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 1829. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Butanedioic acid, dimethyl ester, polymer with 4-hydroxy-2,2,6,6,-tetramethyl-1-piperidineethanol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 1830. A bill to extend the duty suspension on 3-amino-2′-(sulfato-ethyl sulfonyl) ethyl benzamide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 1831. A bill to extend the duty suspension on MUB 738 INT; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 1832. A bill to extend the suspension of duty on 5-amino-N-(2-hydroxyethyl)-2,3-xylenesulfonamide; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. COBLE:

H.R. 1833. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on mixtures of 1,3,5-Triazine-2,4,6-triamine,N,N‴-[1,2-ethane-diyl-bis [[[4,6-bis-[butyl (1,2,2,6,6-pentamethyl-4-piperidinyl)amino]-1,3,5-triazine-2 -yl] imino]-3,1-propanediyl]] bis[N′,N″- dibutyl-N′,N″-bis(1,2,2,6,6-pentamethyl-4-piperidinyl)- and Butanedioic acid, dimethylester polymer with 4-hyroxy-2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-1-piperdine ethanol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. CUNNINGHAM (for himself and Mr. MARKEY):

H.R. 1834. A bill to provide for various energy efficiency programs and tax incentives, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means, and Financial Services, 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. DAVIS of California:

H.R. 1835. A bill to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to allow all eligible voters to vote by mail in Federal elections; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. FEENEY:

H.R. 1836. A bill to designate the information center at Canaveral National Seashore as the ''T.C. Wilder, Jr., Canaveral National Seashore Information Center''; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. RENZI, Mr. SHADEGG, and Mr. FRANKS of Arizona):

H.R. 1837. A bill to amend the Endangered Species Act of 1973 to establish limitations on the designation of critical habitat, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 1838. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 3-Cyclohexene-1-carboxylic acid, 6-[(di-2-propenylamino)carbonyl]-,(1R,6R)-rel-, reaction products with pentafluoroiodoethane-tetrefluoroethylene telomer, ammonium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 1839. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Glycine, N,N-Bis[2-hydroxy-3-(2-propenyloxy)propyl]-, monosodium salt, reaction products with ammonium hydroxide and pentafluoroiodoethane-tetrafluoroethylyene telomer; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 1840. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 5,5-bis[(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl]-2-hydroxy-2-oxo -1,3,2-dioxaphosphorinane, ammonium salt and 2,2-bis[(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl]-3-hydroxy proply phosphate, di-ammonium salt and Di-[2,2-bis[(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl]]-3-hydroxy proply phosphate, ammonium salt and 2,2-bis[(y,w-perfluoroC4-20alkylthio)methyl]-1,3-di-(dihydro genphosphate)-propane, tetra-ammonium salt; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 1841. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on 1(3H)-Isobenzofuranone, 3,3-bis(2-methyl-1-octyl-1H-indol-3-yl)-; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FORBES:

H.R. 1842. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on a mixture of Poly[[6-[(1,1,3,3-tetramethylbutyl)amino]-1,3,5-triazine-2,4 diyl][(2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-4-piperidinyl)imino]-1,6-exanediy [(2,2,6,6-tetramethyl-4-piperidinyl)imino]]) and Bis(2,2,6,6,-tetramethyl-4-piperidyl)sebaceate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAVES:

H.R. 1843. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on MCPA; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAVES:

H.R. 1844. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Bronate Advanced; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAVES:

H.R. 1845. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Bromoxynil Octanoate Tech; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. GRAVES:

H.R. 1846. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on Bromoxynil MEO; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. HENSARLING:

H.R. 1847. A bill to redesignate the National Scientific Balloon Facility in Palestine, Texas, as the ''Columbia Scientific Balloon Center''; to the Committee on Science.

By Mr. HOLDEN:

H.R. 1848. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on certain bitumen-coated polyethylene sleeves specifically designed to protect in-ground wood posts; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. KELLY (for herself, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. PLATTS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. HALL, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. WEINER, Mr. KIND, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. STRICKLAND, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. OBERSTAR, Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. BACA, Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. SPRATT, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. DICKS, Mr. HOLT, Mr. REYES, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. WATT, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. OLVER, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. MCINTYRE, Mr. COOPER, Mr. FORD, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. MCCARTHY, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. FILNER, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. BERRY, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. OWENS, Mr. WYNN, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. STUPAK, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. HINOJOSA, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. MEEHAN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. CLAY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. LEE, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SIMMONS, Ms. HART, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. NORTON, Ms. SOLIS, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. ROSS):

H.R. 1849. 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 Education and the Workforce, and 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. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. KING of New York):

H.R. 1850. A bill to provide for fire safety standards for cigarettes, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. NUNES:

H.R. 1851. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on nylon woolpacks used to package wool; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. OTTER (for himself and Mr. SIMPSON):

H.R. 1852. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to extend certain water contracts in Idaho, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. RAMSTAD (for himself and Mr. MOORE of Kansas):

H.R. 1853. A bill to ensure that the total amount of funds awarded to a State under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 for each of fiscal years 2005 and 2006 is not less than the total amount of funds awarded to the State under such part for fiscal year 2003; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1854. A bill to suspend temporarily the duty on magnesium zinc aluminum hydroxide carbonate hydrate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1855. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on magnesium aluminum hydroxide carbonate hydrate; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1856. A bill to extend the temporary duty suspension on C12-18 Alkenes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1857. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on polytetramethylene ether glycol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 1858. A bill to extend the temporary suspension of duty on cis-3-Hexen-1-ol; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. RENZI:

H.R. 1859. A bill to make careers in public service more feasible for students who graduate with high educational loan debt; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. ROHRABACHER (for himself and Mr. JONES of North Carolina):

H.R. 1860. A bill to amend the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 to exempt from the means test in

bankruptcy cases, for a limited period, qualifying reserve-component members who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 60 days; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania (for herself, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 1861. A bill to direct the Consumer Product Safety Commission to issue regulations concerning the safety and labeling of certain furniture and electronic appliances; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. STEARNS (for himself, Mr. BASS, Mr. UPTON, Mrs. BLACKBURN, and Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas):

H.R. 1862. A bill to direct the Secretary of Commerce to issue regulations requiring testing for steroids and other performance-enhancing substances for certain sports associations engaged in interstate commerce; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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. WILSON of New Mexico (for herself and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota):

H.R. 1863. A bill to amend the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 to make available additional funds to increase access to the arts through the support of education; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. WYNN:

H.R. 1864. A bill to provide for enhanced retirement benefits for administrative law judges; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 1865. A bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to release the condition on a portion of land adjacent to the community of Beaver, Alaska, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska:

H.R. 1866. A bill to facilitate shareholder consideration of making Settlement Common Stock under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act available to Alaska Natives born after December 18, 1971, descendants of Alaska Natives born after December 18, 1971, missed enrollees, and Native Elders, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Resources.

By Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan (for himself, Ms. WATSON, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania):

H.J. Res. 44. A joint resolution honoring the life and legacy of Frederick William Augustus von Steuben and recognizing his contributions on the 275th anniversary of his birth; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. NEY (for himself and Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD):

H. Res. 232. A resolution permitting official photographs of the House of Representatives to be taken while the House is in actual session on a date designated by the Speaker; to the Committee on House Administration. considered and agreed to.

By Mr. GALLEGLY (for himself, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. SHERMAN):

H. Res. 233. A resolution recognizing the 60th anniversary of Victory in Europe (V-E) Day during World War II; to the Committee on International Relations, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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. MOLLOHAN:

H. Res. 234. A resolution providing for consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 131) amending rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives with regard to the procedures of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct; to the Committee on Rules.

By Ms. DEGETTE (for herself, Mr. BEAUPREZ, Mr. HEFLEY, Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. TANCREDO, and Mr. UDALL of Colorado):

H. Res. 237. A resolution congratulating the University of Denver Pioneers for winning the 2005 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Ice Hockey Championship; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mr. SABO (for himself, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. KLINE, and Mr. GUTKNECHT):

H. Res. 238. A resolution commending the University of Minnesota women's ice hockey team for winning the 2004-2005 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Women's Ice Hockey Championship, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

PRIVATE BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

Mr. ANDREWS introduced a bill (H.R. 1867) for the relief of Mohammed Manir Hossain, Ferdous Ara Manir, and Maish Samiha Manir; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 11: Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. MELANCON, and Mr. DOGGETT.

H.R. 13: Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. BEAUPREZ, Mr. UPTON, Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico, Mr. ROSS, and Mr. NORWOOD.

H.R. 19: Mr. FOLEY.

H.R. 22: Mr. MARCHANT, Mr. COSTA, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. TIBERI, and Mr. MCKEON.

H.R. 23: Mr. WAMP, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. LIPINSKI, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. NADLER, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. HALL, and Mr. UPTON.

H.R. 25: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.

H.R. 47: Mr. RENZI.

H.R. 98: Mr. SENSENBRENNER.

H.R. 111: Mr. KIRK, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. TANCREDO, and Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 136: Mrs. MUSGRAVE.

H.R. 153: Mr. MARKEY, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. BISHOP of New York, and Mr. SERRANO.

H.R. 292: Mrs. DRAKE.

H.R. 302: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 303: Mr. COOPER, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. BOUSTANY, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. DUNCAN, and Mr. MELANCON.

H.R. 333: Mr. CARDOZA and Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 339: Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.

H.R. 363: Ms. ESHOO and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 371: Mr. MCDERMOTT and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 438: Mr. MCKEON and Mr. RADANOVICH.

H.R. 442: Mr. KINGSTON, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. CHOCOLA, and Mr. FLAKE.

H.R. 515: Mr. KANJORSKI and Mr. CARDOZA.

H.R. 534: Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. BONNER, and Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 539: Mr. BLUNT, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, Mr. OWENS, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 554: Mr. BONILLA.

H.R. 556: Ms. BEAN and Mrs. ROYBAL-ALLARD.

H.R. 558: Mr. FARR, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. RANGEL, and Mr. MELANCON.

H.R. 559: Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD and Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 562: Mr. WEINER.

H.R. 567: Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H.R. 583: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. WAMP, and Ms. HART.

H.R. 588: Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 602: Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, and Mr. ALEXANDER.

H.R. 615: Mr. KANJORSKI, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington.

H.R. 633: Mr. ANDREWS.

H.R. 653: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 689: Mr. EVERETT.

H.R. 691: Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN and Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 752: Mr. KILDEE, Mr. MICHAUD, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 754: Mr. BUTTERFIELD.

H.R. 800: Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. MCKEON, Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico, and Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 807: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. PASCRELL, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 809: Mrs. KELLY, Mr. CHOCOLA, Mr. SWEENEY, Mr. FOSSELLA, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. JINDAL, and Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 810: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. BOYD, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mr. CRAMER.

H.R. 818: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 819: Mr. FOLEY, Mr. CHOCOLA, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 827: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 887: Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. FARR, and Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 899: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.

H.R. 918: Mr. FEENEY.

H.R. 923: Mr. INSLEE, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. SWEENEY, and Mr. ROGERS of Alabama.

H.R. 934: Mrs. KELLY, Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.

H.R. 952: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 955: Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 997: Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ADERHOLT, and Mr. LINDER.

H.R. 999: Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. WOLF, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. REYES, and Mr. PLATTS.

H.R. 1002: Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. ANDREWS, and Mr. PASCRELL.

H.R. 1033: Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.

H.R. 1059: Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island.

H.R. 1092: Mr. COX.

H.R. 1103: Mr. STARK, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, and Mr. FILNER.

H.R. 1124: Ms. BALDWIN and Mr. DEFAZIO.

H.R. 1130: Ms. DELAURO and Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 1132: Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. JINDAL, Mr. WYNN, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. RUSH, Mr. KILDEE, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. DICKS, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. BONO, and Mr. ALEXANDER.

H.R. 1146: Mr. DUNCAN.
H.R. 1157: Ms. MATSUI.
H.R. 1175: Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. FILNER, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. HINCHEY.
H.R. 1182: Mr. OWENS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. JEFFERSON.
H.R. 1185: Mr. BEAUPREZ.
H.R. 1204: Mr. SAXTON, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. GORDON, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. BEAN, Mr. SPRATT, and Mr. JACKSON of Illinois.
H.R. 1217: Mr. LARSEN of Washington.
H.R. 1226: Mr. ROYCE.
H.R. 1279: Mr. ETHERIDGE.
H.R. 1285: Mr. HYDE.
H.R. 1322: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. SERRANO.
H.R. 1329: Mr. FARR, Mr. KILDEE, and Mrs. MALONEY.
H.R. 1355: Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. BOUSTANY, and Mr. BURTON of Indiana.
H.R. 1357: Mr. CANNON and Mr. TIBERI.
H.R. 1364: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.
H.R. 1366: Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. LAHOOD, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. RAMSTAD, and Mr. MELANCON.
H.R. 1373: Mr. CONYERS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. COSTA, and Mrs. DRAKE.
H.R. 1376: Mr. KING of New York, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. LANTOS, and Ms. BALDWIN.
H.R. 1390: Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. CONYERS.
H.R. 1397: Mr. REYNOLDS.
H.R. 1406: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. LYNCH, and Mrs. DRAKE.
H.R. 1408: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1413: Mr. ROTHMAN.
H.R. 1424: Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. DOGGETT, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, and Mr. SHIMKUS.
H.R. 1426: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mr. RUSH.
H.R. 1440: Mr. SERRANO, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. FILNER.
H.R. 1469: Mrs. CUBIN and Mr. FLAKE.
H.R. 1471: Mr. KILDEE.
H.R. 1480: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. WYNN, Mr. STARK, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. ALLEN.
H.R. 1491: Mr. LIPINSKI.
H.R. 1496: Mr. BOSWELL, Mr. HAYES, Mr. EHLERS, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.
H.R. 1500: Mr. KOLBE and Mr. FLAKE.
H.R. 1505: Mr. INSLEE, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin Mr. HIGGINS, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. BEAN, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. CUELLAR, Mrs. NORTHUP, Mr. MUSGRAVE Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. HAYES, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, and Mr. CUNNINGHAM.
H.R. 1521: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY.
H.R. 1544: Mr. PRICE of Georgia and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.R. 1553: Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1554: Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. KILDEE, and Mr. HOLT.
H.R. 1575: Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. BERRY, Mr. DINGELL, Mr. COSTELLO, and Mr. TERRY.
H.R. 1588: Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. HONDA, and Mr. COSTELLO.
H.R. 1595: Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan.
H.R. 1608: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. COSTELLO.
H.R. 1620: Mr. BAIRD, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, and Mr. BERMAN.
H.R. 1635: Mr. CARTER and Mrs. DRAKE.
H.R. 1636: Mr. VAN HOLLEN and Mr. SAXTON.
H.R. 1639: Mr. LYNCH and Ms. WOOLSEY.
H.R. 1652: Mr. LANTOS, Mr. WEINER, and Mr. DICKS.
H.R. 1668: Mr. STRICKLAND, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, and Mr. MCDERMOTT.
H.R. 1678: Mr. BEAUPREZ.
H.R. 1688: Mr. INSLEE and Mr. SHERMAN.
H.R. 1694: Mr. BLUMENAUER.
H.R. 1696: Mr. FARR, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. ISRAEL, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H.R. 1704: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. NORTON, Mr. BOUCHER, and Mr. WOLF.
H.R. 1709: Mr. CARNAHAN, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Ms. LEE, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. INSLEE, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. OLVER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. SOLIS, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KIND, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. SANDERS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Ms. HARMAN, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Ms. DELAURO.
H.R. 1729: Mr. WAXMAN and Mr. RANGEL.
H.R. 1736: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona and Mr. DREIER.
H.R. 1749: Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. NEY, and Mr. FLAKE.
H.J. Res. 10: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BACHUS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN.
H.J. Res. 14: Mr. MILLER of Florida.
H.J. Res. 16: Mr. FLAKE.
H.J. Res. 38: Mr. SIMMONS.
H. Con. Res. 24: Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, and Mr. ROTHMAN.
H. Con. Res. 40: Mr. ANDREWS.
H. Con. Res. 69: Mr. FRANKS of Arizona.
H. Con. Res. 71: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CONYERS, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio.
H. Con. Res. 90: Mr. SABO, Mr. CONYERS, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. FARR, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SERRANO, and Mr. ORTIZ.
H. Con. Res. 96: Ms. WATSON, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. SOLIS, and Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas.
H. Con. Res. 99: Mr. REYES and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 127: Mr. MEEKS of New York, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. WYNN, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. CLAY.
H. Con. Res. 128: Mr. SCOTT of Georgia.
H. Con. Res. 131: Mr. RAMSTAD.
H. Con. Res. 132: Mr. SIMPSON and Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey.
H. Res. 67: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. BACA, and Mr. PRICE of North Carolina.
H. Res. 84: Mrs. NORTHUP and Mr. HOSTETTLER.
H. Res. 85: Mr. WEXLER.
H. Res. 116: Mr. WU, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. HOLT, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. CARNAHAN.
H. Res. 158: Ms. LEE.
H. Res. 166: Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. CARDOZA, and Ms. WATSON.
H. Res. 169: Mrs. BONO.
H. Res. 175: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H. Res. 193: Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. KINGSTON, and Mr. BERMAN.
H. Res. 195: Mr. GALLEGLY, Mr. ISSA, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. ENGEL, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. TIAHRT, and Mr. LIPINSKI.
H. Res. 215: Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. PENCE, Mr. FEENEY, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mr. GINGREY.
H. Res. 220: Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. TURNER, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. OWENS, and Mr. KUHL of New York.
H. Res. 227: Mr. ACKERMAN.
H. Res. 228: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WYNN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. INSLEE, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. YOUNG of Florida, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. BONILLA, Mr. COBLE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. HALL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. ROYCE, and Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia.

DELETIONS OF SPONSORS FROM PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were deleted from public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 1762: Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. JINDAL, and Mr. FEENEY.