

in the country. Although the project initially met with delays, California is now on track to compliance by September 2006.

However, rather than reducing the penalties as California makes progress towards its goal, the Federal penalties actually continue to grow, because the penalties are based on the amount the State invests in child support programs for the previous year. Effectively, we are hurting the very children that the program is trying to help by punishing States for doing their best to get each child the support payments they are owed.

My bill, the Child Support Reinvestment Act, will lower the penalties and allow the money levied in penalty to be used for the benefit of the children instead of the Federal Government's general fund. This is smart regulation for the States.

BORDER PATROL AND ILLEGAL ALIENS

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, multiple news reports claim that the U.S. Border Patrol has been ordered to stop arresting illegal aliens in Arizona where American citizens have been patrolling. And why have the agents been asked to stop these arrests? Because an increase in the arrest rate was proving the effectiveness of the Minuteman volunteers.

I hope our government has not told agents to stop making arrests. I hope that the efforts of concerned citizens were not in vain.

Our government has spent close to \$240 million to monitor the Mexican and Canadian borders with the latest technology. The problem? The equipment does not work. What is clear is that the Minutemen are working. Border agents credited the Minutemen with cutting the flow of illegal aliens with the number caught dropping from 500 a day to less than 15 per day. Madam Speaker, new solutions are needed; we cannot just throw money at our problems. It is clear that a group of concerned citizens are doing what \$240 million could not do, but we need a permanent fix.

Madam Speaker, illegal immigration is not simply going to go away. We know there is a problem, and we must take the initiative and address this problem now.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATION FALLS SHORT

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, this Homeland Security appropriation falls short in many areas: port security, first responders, interoperable communications, and aviation.

In aviation, recent tests by the Inspector General and the GAO show that there are unacceptable, continuing vulnerabilities to our system of aviation, and their conclusion is simple: the performance of finding explosives and other threat objects will not improve until we give the screeners 21st-century technology to fight 21st-century threats. The junk they are working with was thrown out a decade ago because it was inadequate for the United States Capitol before 9/11, but we are still using it in our airports and demanding they find threat objects that the machines simply cannot find. The Subcommittee on Homeland Security of the Committee on Appropriations is failing the test too. They are failing to protect the American traveling public.

JUDICIAL NOMINATION OF PRISCILLA OWEN

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, 2 years ago this month, I rose to express my outrage with Democrats over their treatment of my fellow Texan, Supreme Court Justice Priscilla Owen. Today, due to Democrats' continued obstruction, Justice Owen, a highly qualified nominee from the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, is still being denied a simple up-or-down vote in the Senate.

Madam Speaker, despite unanimously receiving the highest possible rating of the American Bar Association, despite the strong, bipartisan support of several former Texas Supreme Court Justices and 15 past presidents of the State Bar of Texas, Texas Supreme Court Justice Priscilla Owen has still not received a simple up-or-down vote for 4 years. For 4 years, Senate Democrats have worked to obstruct our Constitution.

When Republicans were in power during President Clinton's term, no judicial nominee was ever deprived of a vote due to a filibuster. Now, after 200 years of American history, Democrats want to unilaterally change the rules.

Madam Speaker, Justice Owen has a right to get a vote on her nomination. Basic fairness dictates it, as does our Constitution.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF VIETNAMESE AMERICANS

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

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of people, our Vietnamese Americans.

This month, the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman TOM DAVIS) introduced, and the House passed, an important resolution honoring the contribu-

tions of the Vietnamese Americans over the past 3 decades, enriching our society with diversity, culture, and strength. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the chairman for his work on this important issue.

Madam Speaker, 27,000 Vietnamese Americans live in my district of Washington State. One of the most remarkable experiences I have had as sheriff of King County in Washington, which I am now lucky enough to continue to represent as Congressman, is attending an annual event where South Vietnamese Police officers are recognized.

When the United States pulled out of Saigon, many were left behind. Some were executed, some sentenced to prison camps, some starved and beaten to death, all for being friends of the United States. And each year, these Vietnamese, who spent 15 to 20 years in prison camps, stand and salute our flag with tears in their eyes because they know what freedom is. They remind us of how great our country is, and I am privileged and proud to represent them.

JUSTICE OWEN: WELL QUALIFIED

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, yesterday, The Wall Street Journal highlighted the extreme and politically charged use of the Senate Democratic filibuster.

Editors at The Wall Street Journal clearly articulated the audacity of the Democrats' radical claims against nominee Priscilla Owen of Texas. Justice Owen is a well-respected and accomplished nominee who enjoys significant bipartisan support and would be quickly confirmed if given an up-or-down vote. Unfortunately, Democrats are denying her this opportunity in a desperate attempt to hold on to Federal power and legislation through the judicial system. Their agenda is fueled by bitterness and is not in the best interests of the American people.

Majority Leader BILL FRIST is to be commended for maintaining the constitutional case for an up-or-down vote. Democrat obstructionism is a radical deviation from allowing Senators to vote for the nominees who are highly qualified to serve our country. I support Senator FRIST's efforts and urge Senate Democrats to give Justice Owen a fair vote.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

UP-OR-DOWN VOTE FOR JUSTICE PRISCILLA OWEN

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

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I too rise this morning, along with my fellow Texans, to recommend to the other body that they have an up-or-