

the city's school system. I had the honor, Mr. Speaker, as serving as chairman of the Marietta School Board during that time, and I experienced firsthand the compassion and commitment she had for the schools.

In 1984, Ansley conceived the idea of Marietta's Schools Foundation, an organization to support the teachers and the students of Marietta. As the organization's president, Ansley presented the Distinguished Alumni Award at nearly every Marietta High School graduation ceremony for more than 20 years. And each year she urged graduating seniors to be loyal to their alma mater, to their community, and to the valued friendships created at Marietta High.

As the city's leader, Ansley was successful in lowering taxes and improving city services, building a new courthouse, adding two new fire stations, and constructing a new police headquarters. Even with all of her accomplishments, she remained a gracious and humble leader.

Two weeks ago, on May 4, 2005, Ansley Meaders suffered a fatal heart attack while cooking dinner in her home. This devastating news fell over the community like a dark cloud, Mr. Speaker. One of our greatest community members had slipped away from us. She leaves behind her husband of more than 40 years, Frank, two children, Mary Ansley and Robert, and four precious grandchildren, Rosser, Georgia, Trey and Hunter; and an entire community who loved her dearly.

After only 59 years, Ansley's life and physical presence in her beloved Marietta, Georgia, has ended. But, Mr. Speaker, her passing leaves Marietta with a legacy of service, dedication, and humble leadership that will remain for generations to come. God bless Mayor Ansley Meaders.

CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, CAFTA, the United States Central American Free Trade Agreement, is yet another unfair trade deal that will hurt American workers. CAFTA is the latest unfair trade deal in a decade of failed trade policies. Over the last 12 years, the United States trade deficit has exploded from \$39 billion in 1992 to over \$618 billion in 2004. If CAFTA becomes effective, the result will be fewer jobs for American workers.

CAFTA is modeled on NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which had and continues to have a devastating impact on many American workers. When NAFTA was passed in 1994, the United States had a \$2 billion trade surplus with Mexico. In 2004, we had a \$45 billion trade deficit in Mexico. That means our trade deficit with Mexico increased by an average of \$4.7 billion per year over the last 10

years. As a result of NAFTA, the United States has been exporting American jobs to Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, the countries of Central America already receive preferential trade benefits. About 80 percent of exports from CAFTA countries enter the United States duty free. If CAFTA is passed, 100 percent of nontextile manufactured goods from Central America will enter the United States duty free.

CAFTA supporters like to claim that CAFTA will create new markets for American products, but this argument is highly flawed. The six countries of Central America, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic are among the world's smallest economies. These six countries have a combined economic output of only \$85 billion. My home city, Metropolitan Los Angeles, with a \$411 billion economy, produces nearly five times the volume of goods and services as the CAFTA countries. The CAFTA countries are simply just too small to absorb a significant quantity of American manufactured goods.

Unfortunately, the countries of Central America also are among the poorest countries. The average Nicaraguan worker earns only \$2,300 per year, or about \$191 per month. Forty percent of Central American workers earn less than \$2 per day. Central American workers simply cannot afford to buy American cars from Ohio or American computers from California.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent much of my time in Congress working on the issue of debt relief for poor countries. Two of the CAFTA countries, Honduras and Nicaragua, are included in my legislation, H.R. 1130, The Jubilee Act, which cancels the debts that poor countries owe to multilateral institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In 2004, Nicaragua paid these institutions \$107 million in debt service payments. That is \$107 million that Nicaraguans could not spend on American products. As long as these countries remain heavily indebted and deeply impoverished, their people will never be able to afford American products made by American workers.

Any way you look at it, CAFTA is a one-sided deal that offers limited benefits to foreign workers at a tremendous cost to American workers. The only service these six teeny Central American countries can provide to the United States is cheap labor. It is no surprise, then, that the largest share of U.S. exports to the CAFTA countries consist of fabric. This fabric is stitched into clothing and shipped right back to the United States where it is sold to American consumers.

CAFTA is not a free-trade agreement at all, it is an outsourcing agreement. It allows profit-hungry corporations to shift American jobs to impoverished countries, where workers can be forced to work long hours for little pay and no benefits. It is a bad deal for Central American workers and it is an even

worse deal for workers here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, American workers need good jobs that pay good wages. They do not need another NAFTA. I urge my colleagues to join me in defeating CAFTA.

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

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

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

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

□ 2145

VOTE NO ON CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) for her eloquence in opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement. She obviously understands this much better than some of my other colleagues who have not been so eloquent and thoughtful in their comments about this agreement.

I rise tonight to address the House about the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Last year President Bush signed the Central American Free Trade Agreement, a one-sided plan, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) said, that will lead to more outsourcing. That is what this plan is all about, and not a plan to export American products or help American industry. It is a one-sided plan to benefit multinational corporations at the expense of the United States and Central American workers, small businesses and farmers.

Every trade agreement negotiated by this administration has been ratified by Congress within 65 days of its signing. In other words, when President Bush's United States trade representative negotiated the Moroccan trade agreement, when the President signed the Australia trade agreement, the Singapore trade agreement and the Chilean trade agreement, all four of those trade agreements, upon signature of the President, were voted on by this Congress and passed within 60 days.

The Central American Free Trade Agreement, which we will discuss for a few moments tonight, has languished in Congress for nearly 1 year without a vote because this wrong-headed trade

agreement offends large numbers of Republicans and Democrats in this House, and a significantly higher percentage in the United States of America.

Look at what has happened with our trade policy in the past decade. I was elected to Congress in 1992, 13 years ago. The year I was elected, the United States had a trade deficit of \$38 billion. That means our country imported \$38 billion more goods than we exported. Today, or last year in 2004, our country's trade deficit was \$618 billion. So it went from \$38 billion to \$618 billion.

So what is the President's response to that and what is the Republican leadership's response? Let us do more trade agreements. As if they are working. It does not make sense. Opponents to the Central American Free Trade Agreement understand these numbers. We know what has happened. We can look at the numbers in 1992 when it was \$38 billion. The next year Congress passed the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the deficit began to grow. It exceeded \$100 billion in 1995. A few years later, it exceeded \$200 billion. Around this time Congress passed the China trade agreement, the China PNTR, Permanent Normal Trade Relations with China. Then our trade deficit passed \$300 billion, approaching \$400 billion. In 2003 it exceeded \$500 billion; 2004 it exceeded \$600 billion. And we are on a path in 2005 to see our trade deficit continue to explode to over \$700 billion.

It is the same old story. Every time there is a trade agreement, the President of the United States promises more jobs for Americans, promises more manufacturing done in our country, promises a higher standard of living for Americans, promises better wages for workers in developing countries, and promises a higher standard of living in poor countries.

Yet with every trade deficit, every single time, NAFTA, China, and every other trade agreement, with every trade agreement the promises fall by the wayside in favor of large business interests, not small manufacturing, machine shop owners, but big business interests. They fall by the wayside in favor of big businesses interests that send U.S. jobs overseas and exploit cheap labor abroad.

This chart, this is the last 6-or-so years and what has happened to manufacturing in our country. The States in red are States that have lost a particularly high percentage, more than 20 percent of their manufacturing. All of these States have lost more than 20 percent of their manufacturing jobs as these trade agreements have kicked in and taken effect. Michigan, 210,000; Illinois, 224,000; Ohio, 216,000; Pennsylvania, 199,600; New York, 220,000; North Carolina, 228,000. Smaller States, Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina, West Virginia, Maine, and Massachusetts, have lost somewhere in the vicinity of 50,000 to 150,000 manufacturing jobs.

Mr. Speaker, these are just numbers. These numbers may say, okay, trade policy is not working, that is pretty clear, but put a human face with these numbers. Every time a community, Elyria, Ohio, in my district, when York manufacturing shut down and moved some jobs to other States, most of those jobs to Mexico, 700 families lost their major source of income. Those families were hurt. Those children in those families were hurt. The school district in Elyria was hurt. Police and fire protection in those communities are cut back.

These numbers, whether it is 100,000; 200,000 in Washington State; or 35,000 in Oklahoma; 200,000 in Texas; 72,000 in Florida, these are numbers; but there are human faces with these numbers. Every time a manufacturing plant closes and moves overseas, children are hurt, families are hurt, schools are hurt, communities are hurt. It does not make sense.

In the face of growing bipartisan opposition, the administration and Republican leadership have tried every trick in the book to pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement. First of all, the administration, when they saw the merits of the argument were simply not working with Congress, the American people and this Congress rejected out of hand for the last 12 months, that is why we have not voted on the Central American Free Trade Agreement for a whole year, it is clear they rejected out of hand those arguments that the administration and the largest corporations in our country were making about the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

So what did the administration do? They linked the Central American Free Trade Agreement to fighting the war on terror. They said that if we do not pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement, it would cause problems in fighting the war on terror. Well, that argument, nobody really bought that argument. Republicans and Democrats did not buy it, in part because 10 years of the North American Free Trade Agreement has done nothing to improve border security between the United States and Mexico. That argument simply does not sell.

So the administration tried something else. First their arguments were not working. Then they tried to play the terrorism card, that we need this trade agreement with these six countries in order to fight the war on terror. The next thing they tried was 2 weeks ago the United States Chamber of Commerce, allies of the President on passing this agreement, representing the largest companies in America, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce put together a junket for those presidents to travel to the United States.

Those six presidents, five Central American presidents and the Dominican Republic president flew around the United States hoping to sell CAFTA. Large businesses in the U.S. had not changed the American people's minds.

The President's arguments were not working, so these six presidents traveled to Albuquerque, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, Cincinnati, Ohio in my State. And, finally, they returned to Washington. But again they failed.

The Costa Rican president announced that his country would not ratify CAFTA unless an independent commission could determine that the agreement would not hurt working people in Costa Rica. As these six presidents flew around the country, they did not convince the newspapers, the American public, or Congress. And one of their own said I am not so sure we should ratify this agreement either.

Now the next step is the most powerful Republican in the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the House majority leader, joined by the Committee on Ways and Means chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), said there would be a vote on CAFTA by Memorial Day, which is the 1-year anniversary of the President signing the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

We are barely 1 week away from that 1-year anniversary, and still no vote in sight. I would add that this agreement, unlike every other trade agreement, has been languishing in this Congress. Every other trade agreement sent by President Bush was passed within 60 days. This trade agreement has been 11 months and 20-some days still without a vote because the people of this country, in this Congress, the people's representatives, simply do not buy that our trade policy is working.

Mr. Speaker, look at these numbers. How can you make the argument that trade policy in America is working when we have gone from a \$38 billion to a \$618 billion trade deficit in only 12 years when we have pursued these kinds of NAFTA-like trade policies. Understand, CAFTA rhymes with NAFTA for a reason. CAFTA is very similar to NAFTA. It is the same kind of trade agreement; we will see the same kind of results. It is simply not working.

Last month two dozen Democrats and Republicans in Congress joined more than 150 business groups and labor organizations on the steps of one of the House office buildings saying vote "no" on the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Last week more than 400 workers and Members of Congress gathered again in front of the Capitol saying vote "no" on CAFTA.

Why? It is simple. Because Republicans and Democrats, business and labor groups know what the administration refuses to admit. What the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) said, CAFTA is about one thing and one thing only: CAFTA is about access to cheap labor. We know that CAFTA is about access to cheap labor simply because Central American countries cannot afford to buy American goods. Let me explain what that means.

About 5 years ago, Mr. Speaker, I flew at my own expense to McAllen,

Texas, rented a car and went across the border to Reynosa, Mexico. I wanted to see the face of globalization. I wanted to see what the North American Free Trade Agreement after 5 or 6 years in effect, what it really meant for our country, what it meant to Mexico, what it meant to our relations, and on the border.

I went to Reynosa, Mexico. I visited a couple who worked at General Electric Mexico, 3 miles from the United States. Their home was a small shack, maybe 20 feet by 15 feet. They lived in a home with no electricity, no running water, with dirt floors. When it rained hard, the dirt floors turned to mud. As I walked around their neighborhood, I saw other shacks that looked a lot like theirs. Amazingly enough, I could tell where the workers worked because their shacks were built, their homes were built out of packing material from the companies for which they worked. Cardboard boxes, crates, wooden platforms, that is how they constructed their roof and walls and their homes.

As I walked around their neighborhood, I saw a ditch behind their home that was maybe 4 feet wide. Who knows what human waste and industrial waste was running through this ditch. Children were playing nearby. The American Medical Association said the area around the U.S.-Mexican border is the most toxic place in the western hemisphere.

We then went to a General Motors plant not far from these workers' homes. The General Motors plant looked just like a General Motors plant in Ohio. It looks just like the Lordstown plant in northeast Ohio. It looked just like a Chrysler plant in Twinsburg. It looked just like a Ford plant in Avon Lake or Lorain, Ohio.

As you walked through this plant, it was modern; the technology was up to date. The floors were clean; the workers were working hard. There was one difference between the plant in Mexico and the plant in Lorain, Ohio. The difference was there was no parking lot at the plant in Mexico. Why? Because Mexican workers were not making enough, 3 miles from the United States, were not making enough to buy the cars that they make, 3 miles from the United States.

You could go halfway around the world to a Motorola plant in Malaysia, the workers were not earning enough to buy the cell phones that they make. You could come halfway back around the world to Costa Rica to a Disney plant, the workers were not earning enough to buy the toys for their children that they were making. You could fly halfway around the world again to the People's Republic of China, to Communist China to a Nike plant, and the workers were not making enough to buy the shoes that they make.

□ 2200

The Central American Free Trade Agreement represents that kind of

trade policy. Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, Hondurans make about one-tenth what Americans make. An American makes about \$38,000 average a year. In many cases, middle-class Americans make enough to buy a car, to buy a home, to send their kids to college, to purchase washing machines and to purchase appliances and to purchase carpet and all the things that they buy. Unfortunately, Guatemalans and Hondurans and Nicaraguans, because their wages are so low, because the global economy is not working for them, they simply cannot afford to make these purchases. So this Central American Free Trade Agreement, it is about sending American jobs to Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. It is about sending these jobs there where these workers simply are not going to make enough money to buy American products. It is not about those people in those countries purchasing goods made in the United States. We are losing manufacturing jobs. Our overall trade deficit continues to increase. You can bet that Guatemalan workers cannot afford to buy cars made in Ohio. Nicaraguan workers cannot afford to buy steel made in West Virginia. Honduran workers cannot afford to buy software made in Seattle or prime beef cuts from Nebraska or apparel from Georgia or textiles from North Carolina, simply because in these trade agreements we are doing nothing to lift up wages in these six countries. No enforceable labor standards, no enforceable environmental standards, no efforts by the Central American Free Trade Agreement to lift up worker standards so those workers can join the middle class and they can begin to buy American products. These trade agreements are all about shipping jobs overseas, are all about outsourcing labor, are all about American companies and Taiwanese companies and South Korean companies and other countries' companies going to Central America to exploit cheap labor and to exploit those workers. There is a falling minimum wage, the ongoing nightmare of abject poverty for these workers despite back-breaking work and deplorable working conditions.

CAFTA's nations are not only among the poorest countries, they are among the smallest economies. The entire economic output of these six CAFTA countries, five in Central America and the Dominican Republic, the entire combined economic output is \$62 billion. That is equivalent to the economic output of Columbus, Ohio; equivalent to the economic output of Memphis, Tennessee; or equivalent to the economic output of Orlando, Florida.

CAFTA, as I said, it is not about exporting American production or goods, it is not about Americans making things and selling them to Central America, it is about access to cheap labor and exporting American jobs much more than it ever is exporting

U.S. goods. As I said, the average worker in Nicaragua earns \$3,800 a year. That is simply not enough to buy American products and it is not enough to mean any kind of exports from the United States to those countries.

Frankly, the Central American Free Trade Agreement should be called the Central American Free Labor Agreement. That is what it is all about. It is not about trade. It is about outsourcing cheap labor.

I mentioned a minute ago that these presidents from these five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic traveled to the United States on a tour to Albuquerque and Cincinnati and to Los Angeles and to Washington and Miami. With all due respect to the Central American leaders who toured our Nation 2 weeks ago, and we should welcome them, what they did not say and what millions of us know already as they campaigned for this agreement is that millions of their workers in addition to tens of millions of American workers simply do not like this trade agreement. What they did not tell reporters is that more than 8,000 Guatemalan workers protested against CAFTA in March. Two of them were killed by government security forces. They did not tell us that tens of thousands of El Salvadorans protested CAFTA 2 years ago. They did not tell us about 18,000 letters sent last year to the Honduran congress by Honduran workers that decried this dysfunctional cousin of the North American Free Trade Agreement. They did not tell us about the 10,000 people in Nicaragua who protested CAFTA in 2003. They did not tell us about the 30,000 CAFTA protesters this past fall in Costa Rica. They did not tell us that literally hundreds of thousands of workers have protested the Central American Free Trade Agreement, workers in Central America, in more than 45 demonstrations in the last 3 years.

Trade pacts like NAFTA and CAFTA enable companies to exploit cheap labor, then import those products back to the United States. I repeat, that is what these trade agreements are about. They are about shutting down American factories, moving these factories to Central America as they did to Mexico, exploiting workers, paying them barely a livable wage let alone a living wage, paying them barely a livable wage, then sending products back into the United States. As a result, America is bleeding manufacturing jobs and running unprecedented trade deficits.

Again, look at the trade deficit, from \$38 billion to \$618 billion in a dozen years. President Bush, Sr., back in 1992 when we had a trade deficit of \$38 billion, he said, \$1 billion in trade deficit translates into 12,000 lost jobs. So if you have a trade surplus of \$1 billion, you increase 12,000 jobs. If you have a deficit of \$1 billion, you lose 12,000 jobs. Multiply that by \$618 billion and you see the kind of job loss, perhaps as much as 7 million jobs lost because of

our manufacturing and trade policy in this country.

What we are seeing, Mr. Speaker, is America is bleeding with our trade deficit, and bleeding manufacturing jobs from our country. Again, all these States in red in the last 5 years have lost more than 20 percent of their manufacturing jobs. All the States in blue have lost at least 15 percent of their manufacturing jobs. Basically every large State, every single large State in this country: California, Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota. Every single large State has lost at least 15 percent, one out of six manufacturing jobs in this country in the last 5 years. Again, those manufacturing jobs, losing those jobs, they are not just numbers. They are about families, they are about children, they are about schools and they are about communities and police and fire and making our communities prosperous. Gregory Mankiw, the President's former Chief Economist, portrayed the exporting of jobs as inevitable and desirable. He said, "When a good or service is produced more cheaply abroad, it makes more sense to import it than to provide it domestically."

Unfortunately, that is the attitude of the administration. That is the attitude of people who have written this trade policy that have led to these kinds of manufacturing job losses and have led to these kinds of trade deficits and that is the attitude of people who are pushing the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

What really instead, Mr. Speaker, makes sense is a trade policy that lifts workers up in rich countries like ours, in poor countries like Costa Rica and Honduras and Guatemala and the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, while respecting human rights and democratic principles. The United States with its unrivaled purchasing power, the greatest in history, and its enormous economic clout, again the greatest in history, we as a Nation are in a unique position to help empower poor workers in developing countries while promoting prosperity at home.

When the world's poorest people can buy American products rather than just make them, then we will know, Mr. Speaker, finally that our trade policies are working.

OMISSION FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2005 AT PAGE H3462

Mr. COX. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi for purposes of closing debate.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We have heard a number of statements about this bill. It is an initial step in the right direction. It is not comprehensive. There are some glaring overlooks in the bill. We do not address

any aviation security, we do not address chemical security. There are a number of things that we could do better in this bill.

However, I have to join my chairman in recognizing the fact that this is our first attempt to do an authorization bill. It is by no means complete, but given his leadership and willingness to work in a bipartisan spirit, I am looking forward to moving this legislation and making sure that we do the right thing for this country. We have to secure this Nation.

I will be offering a substitute later in the debate which obviously will cover far more areas than what this authorization bill covers that we are debating here today.

Clearly, if we support the substitute, we can move closer to making America secure.

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

Mr. COX. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I want to begin by thanking the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), both for his generous remarks but, more importantly, for his hard work on this piece of legislation over a period of several months and, as he pointed out, through ultimately a very long, arduous markup in the committee where members on both sides had an unlimited opportunity to offer amendments and consider a variety of topics.

As we conclude general debate and prepare to move into debate on the specific amendments on this bill, I think we can recognize one important fact, and that is that we are all agreed on the essence of the underlying bill. We have some things, each of us, that we might like to add to this bill, and I predict that in due course, over the rest of this year, we will have an opportunity again on this House floor to take up issues, including aviation security, chemical security, port security, and so on.

But the entirety of what we do accomplish in this bill is bipartisan in nature and agreed upon by the members on both sides of the aisle, at least in the Committee on Homeland Security, and we will soon see about the House as a whole. That is because we have allocated the \$32 billion, for what is now the third largest Cabinet department, in a way that demonstrably advances our number one goal of preventing terrorism in the future on American soil, directed against American citizens, protecting America's most critical infrastructure against terrorist attack, and being prepared to respond and recover should, against all our best preparations, that ever occur in the future.

In order to bring us to this point, we have had to have a great deal of bipartisan assistance, all motivated by the best interests of the country from Members on both sides.

I specifically want to mention the vice chairman of the full committee,

the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON); the chairmen and ranking members of our five subcommittees, and the Staff Directors on both sides, Ben Cohen on the Majority side and Calvin Humphreys on the minority side. The staffs have done extraordinary professional work, and their staffs are drawn from, in many cases, the executive branch, with experience about precisely the work and the programs that we are overseeing in this legislation. Many of them have come from the intelligence community, others come from the Coast Guard and other branches of the armed services.

We can be very proud in this House about the institutionalization of the role of homeland security oversight and authorization that has been set in motion as a result of a decision of leadership on both sides, and I want to conclude by taking this opportunity, once again, to thank the House leadership for its very wise decision to create permanent authorizing and oversight responsibility in this Congress on an institutionalized basis, and then, today, taking the next important step of institutionalizing an annual authorization process so that together the legislative branch and the executive branch will closely collaborate on what is the essence of our national security responsibility to all Americans: making sure that we are safe and secure on American territory for the American citizens.

So, Mr. Chairman, with that, I will draw this general debate to a conclusion, and I look forward to working with the body on the several amendments that have been made in order under the rule.

Mr. Chairman, I will at this time introduce into the RECORD a series of letters exchanged between the Committee on Homeland Security and other standing committees, including the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives, concerning jurisdictional issues raised by this legislation.

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,

Washington, DC, May 18, 2005.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER COX,
Chairman, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your willingness to consult and work with me as you guided H.R. 1817, "the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006" from introduction, through the Homeland Security Committee, and to the floor. As you know, the Committee on Government Reform has been interested in a number of provisions within H.R. 1817. The Committee has been concerned that the expansion of the Department's responsibilities for information sharing in Title II, Subtitle B, Homeland Security Information Sharing and Analysis Enhancement, not lessen the Department's responsibility to follow government-wide policies and procedures for the sharing of information. In addition to the information sharing provisions of Subtitle B, the Committee has specific jurisdictional interests in the following provisions of your substitute: §201—Consolidated Background Check Process; §216—Coordination of homeland security threat analysis provided to