

Mr. Speaker, America has now recovered economically from the tragedy of September 11. We have grown our economy out of recession and passed the tremendous blow on September of 2001, and we did it by reducing regulation and lowering taxes, by working to change the budget process, by reducing what the Federal Government spends, with the budget we have passed this year, by beginning to root out waste, fraud and abuse and being aggressive in that. In other words, we are working to make America competitive.

Mr. Speaker, I salute our Republican leadership for their commitment to this.

DISBAND THE CURRENT COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, in fairness to Members of this body who have been subjected to a cloud of suspicion over ethics allegations, I rise today to call for the House to disband the current Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and reconstitute it as a panel that can convene and hear the cases pending before it.

A report in the Washington Post today says the committee may be inactive for months and it may not take up politically charged accusations against a high-ranking leader until next year, which just happens to be an election year.

The Post says, "Democrats are hoping to gain political advantage from investigations into DELAY's activities and overseas travel and his ties to lobbyist Jack Abramoff."

Even the Democratic-friendly Washington Post sees the political calculations behind the minority's tactics.

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is stalled by a partisan logjam, and I see only one way to unplug it: reconstitute the panel with Members resolved to work together so that it can move forward with its work. If this good-faith effort fails again, the House needs to install a Republican majority on the committee so that the wheels of good government can turn once more.

Mr. Speaker, this body rescinded the ethics rules passed earlier this Congress to appease the minority's demands. Yet, the minority party continues to obstruct the objectives of the Ethics Committee at every turn.

I believe the Republican majority should pass whatever rules necessary so the committee can and will act fairly to hear the pending cases before it—cases that involve both Republicans and Democrats.

Members accused of violations deserve a chance to make their cases and perhaps clear their names.

WE MUST STOP THE BLOODSHED IN SUDAN

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the meeting between the Prime Minister of Britain and this administration.

If one thing has come out of that meeting beyond the need for the \$50 billion for the restoration of the continent of Africa, it is that we must act now to stop the bleeding, the bloodshed and the brutality in Darfur and Sudan.

This week is the 10th year recognition commemoration of the million that died in Rwanda, and we are reminded that they died because of our nonaction, our inertia, our refusal to accept the fact that people were being brutalized and killed. The U.S. did not act.

It is important that military assistance be sent to Sudan now and that the President of Chad be included in this process for the 300,000 refugees that are languishing in Chad without any resources from around the world.

The United States must act, the Congress must act. A declaration of genocide has already been declared. Do we want another Rwanda on our hands, more blood, more bloodshed and loss of life? We cannot afford it. The African Union must be sent. We must stop the bloodshed in Sudan and return the people to their land.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Congress on its successful, pro-growth economic agenda.

In the last month alone, the United States economy created 78,000 new jobs. Take the last 2 years into account, and our economy has created more than 3.5 million jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this growth can be partially credited to the good legislation Congress has passed, legislation that lowers taxes, lets Americans keep more of their hard-earned money, reduces unnecessary regulation, supports our small businesses, and, above all, it encourages economic growth.

Our policies are working. More Americans hold jobs today than ever before. Homeownership is at a near record level, with nearly 70 percent of American families owning their own homes. Small businesses continue to flourish, and our economy is showing steady growth.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that our economic agenda is the right solution for American families. We will continue passing good legislation to build a stronger economy for all Americans.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HON. HENRY HYDE AND THE HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and also the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who worked with me yesterday to attach an amendment to the State Department authorization bill to allow some of the funding that we provide to the State Department to be spent on scholarships and other programs for Cubans.

For years, we have spent hundreds of millions of dollars at the State Department on public diplomacy programs that have helped individuals in countries transitioning to a democracy. Yet Cuba has been excluded from this. If there is any country that needs this help and a people that need this help, it is the country of Cuba.

So now the State Department has been directed to spend at least \$5 million in Fulbright scholarships, Ben Gilman scholarships, Truman scholarships and others to bring worthy Cubans here to the United States to study and help reverse the tide recently of less contact with the Cuban people, to actually have more contact.

This is significant. Again, I pay tribute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for working with me on this.

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS AND COOL LEGISLATION

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the important work this body undertook last night by passing the fiscal year 2006 Agriculture Appropriations Act. This bill took an important step toward helping the farmers of America and my district in North Carolina. Farmers are the backbone of our communities, and we must provide the resources they need. My colleagues and I worked hard to exercise fiscal restraint on this bill without cutting those programs crucial to helping farmers. I feel strongly the bill we passed yesterday did just that.

I would also like to thank this body for voting to uphold a provision that delays the country-of-origin labeling process until it can be dealt with correctly, through current proposed legislation. This delay will allow my colleagues and me on the House Committee on Agriculture time to complete our work on H.R. 2068, the Meat Promotion Act of 2005 sponsored by the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman GOODLATTE).

H.R. 2068 will establish a market-driven, cost-effective, voluntary COOL program for meat such as beef, poultry and pork.