

serve the best interests of their clients. Their commitment to Carolina families has earned this association a reputation of excellence.

The members of this association have also been recognized as national leaders of the automobile industry. Throughout its history, four members of the Carolina Association have served as distinguished presidents of the National Association, including Karen Barbee of Concord, the current president and first woman to lead this national organization.

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

#### MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, here is a recap of the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit headlines and highlights: \$400 billion cost increases to \$800 billion, and not one drug was dispensed.

The program failed to lower the cost of prescription drugs. In fact, drug prices continue to outpace inflation.

The Web site explaining the program did not work and had the wrong information.

When the government sent out the wrong information on the program, they sent seniors the wrong information.

Just this morning, the New York Times reported on delays in processing applications for the new drug benefit. Because of these delays, seniors may not be getting the identification cards they need in time for the January 1st start date, meaning they might not be able to get their prescription drugs.

It is no wonder that President Bush called the benefit program perplexing. But what do you expect? This is the same crowd that mangled the response to Hurricane Katrina and bungled the early stages of the war in Iraq by sending too few troops without proper equipment. It seems the Republican Congress, with this President unchecked, could mess up a one-car parade. Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change and a new set of priorities.

#### IRAQI FREEDOM

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

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, today we are on the eve of Iraq's first election for a 4-year government based on their newly adopted constitution. We stand with the Iraqi people as they choose freedom and democracy over terrorism and oppression. In less than 3 years, they have gone from a brutal dictatorship to electing 275 representatives based on province and population, who will then select a prime minister, a

presidency cabinet, and a cabinet of ministers.

We congratulate the people of Iraq. We stand beside them, and we thank them for their courage, their bravery and their vision. However, we must acknowledge, as they do, that the path will not be easy, but they are truly a miracle in the journey they have undertaken. We are proud of their progress and hopeful for the future for Iraq, the Middle East and the defeat of terrorism around the world.

#### IRAQ HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH 9/11

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, 3,124 innocent civilians died in the 9/11 attacks at the World Trade Center, on the airliners and at the Pentagon; 2,151 U.S. soldiers have been killed in action; 15,881 U.S. soldiers have been wounded; 30,000 Iraqi civilian non-combatants, according to the White House, have been killed in Iraq; 500,000 tons of bombs have been dropped on Iraq by just one U.S. air wing. That is equivalent to 1 billion pounds of explosives, 2 million 500-pound bombs, nearly 400 pounds of explosives for every Iraqi man, woman, and child. Zero is the number of weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq. Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11.

#### VICTORIES IN IRAQ

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we are here on the eve of the elections in Iraq, and it is a significant victory within itself. We congratulate our Iraqi friends on that victory.

Also, in Nashville, there is going to be plenty of purple to be seen because that is a voting site for Iraqis in America to gather and cast their vote. We have to congratulate the Kurdish population there on that victory.

I just returned from Memphis holding town halls speaking to a Rotary club. Our citizens understand this. This is a significant step. They are talking to our men and women from the 278th who have returned, families of the 101st who are currently deployed. They know progress is being made. The Army has just surpassed its projections; 5,800 new recruits have signed up because they are committed. They understand the vision. And to celebrate all of this achievement, Moveon.org is taking petitions to our district offices, calling for immediate withdrawal. They just do not understand the significance of today. We celebrate the success of the victories in Iraq.

HONORING THE 113TH ENGINEER BATTALION, INDIANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to the 113th Engineer Battalion of the Indiana National Guard and welcome them home after 1 year of serving our country heroically in Iraq.

Upon arrival, the 113th was nicknamed the "Ironman Battalion" because of their links to Northwest Indiana's steel industry. Throughout the past year, these ironmen and -women have shown a dedication and commitment to their country that is truly as strong as steel.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that soldiers of the 113th are coming home, coming home to be with their family and friends, coming home to be with their wives, husbands, sons, daughters, mothers and fathers.

The service of these men and women has not been without sacrifice. Over 40 Purple Hearts have been awarded to the 113th Battalion, each serving as a reminder of the danger our soldiers face every day.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome these soldiers home. I thank them for their service and sacrifice to our Nation, and I pledge that our support for them will remain equal to the sacrifice they have shown to our country.

#### SECURE OUR BORDERS

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, today we will be taking up the PATRIOT Act, the extension thereof, and it is important that we do so. It is important for the security of the country.

It is ironic in a way that, as we address this issue and as we debate whether or not we need this kind of internal security mechanism in order to make Americans feel better about themselves and in fact provide that security, there is some irony if the fact that the perimeters, our borders, are as porous as they are and as undefended as they are.

Tomorrow we will take up a bill that will hopefully begin to close those gaps also and begin to defend that perimeter, for without it having a PATRIOT Act is like putting a very expensive apparatus in your home to determine whether or not you have an invader inside the house while you are leaving your front and back doors wide open. That is the problem we have. Hopefully, it will be solved tomorrow with the bill we have before us, the Sensenbrenner bill, to begin the process of securing our border and securing our future.