United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2006 No. 94

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.
July 18, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS E. PETRI 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 31, 2006, 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 25 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate extend beyond 9:50 a.m.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) for 5 minutes.

HONORING JOSEPH NICOLA DELAURO

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember and to honor the memory of my uncle, Joseph Nicola DeLauro. I spoke on this floor when he was honored by the University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada when they named him founding director emeritus of the school of visual arts, the first such title the university has bestowed. Joe DeLauro died this past weekend, and I wanted to take this moment to honor his lifetime of creative works, and I recall my earlier words.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut, Joe DeLauro attended Yale University where he received his bachelor's degree, and later gained his master's at the University of Iowa. He was a sculptor, perhaps best known for his work depicting the archetypal figures from the far past and the Bible. Much of his work, including crucifixions, pietas, virgins, baptismal fonts, stone reliefs, and stained glass windows had been commissioned by churches, convents, schools, and other largely religious institutions. However, you can also find many pieces throughout the public spaces in his home of Canton, Michigan, and in private collections throughout the world.

Internationally recognized for his talent, he was honored by organizations in the United States, England, and Italy. Exhibitions of his work have been displayed in New York, Italy, and Canada. But perhaps his most important contribution was through his work as a teacher. I have often spoke of the need of talented, creative educators ready to help young people learn and grow. This is especially true for the fine arts, where the talent of young artists must be nurtured and encouraged for them to realize their dreams.

A professor of art at both Marygrove College and the University of Detroit in Detroit, Michigan, Joe DeLauro spent the majority of his career as an educator at the University of Windsor. He came to the university in 1960, where he began Windsor's fine arts department. Through his efforts as head of the department, he gained for the institution its right to grant a bachelor of fine arts degree, the first degree-granting privilege of its kind to be granted to an Ontario university. For this accomplishment, he was credited with the founding of Windsor's school of visual arts. In his 20-year career with the University of Ontario, he helped to shepherd hundreds of students through the demanding maze of discipline, taste, and scholarship, and off to their own careers. Mentor, friend, and educator, there was no better example of what a teacher should be.

To be bestowed with the title Founding Director Emeritus was a reflection of the respect, gratitude, and appreciation Joe DeLauro earned throughout his career at the University of Windsor. His extraordinary artistic and academic career leaves an indelible mark on the university, and his spirit will forever live on through the school of visual arts, a legacy that will touch and inspire thousands for generations to come. I join with the entire family of Joseph Nicola DeLauro in their sadness and in their joyful remembrance of a unique person.

Honored in his time and ours, I offer these comments on the floor of the House of Representatives as part of the eternal record of this good man.

MUMBAI BLASTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express concern about Pakistan's links to last week's terrorist attacks on Indian civilians. Although slow moving, the peace process between India and Pakistan was promising, and I am afraid that Pakistan now stands in the way of further progress.

First, I would like to express my deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims of these devastating attacks. On the same day that terrorists hit Mumbai trains in the evening, similar coordinated attacks

Printed on recycled paper.

occurred in Srinagar, Kashmir earlier in the morning. As a result, over 200 people have died and more than 700 have been injured. These attacks were senseless acts of terrorism and violence. I am confident that Indian officials will find the person or organization responsible for these actions and bring them to swift justice.

Mr. Speaker, the government of India has made a strong commitment to fighting terrorism in all its forms. Like the United States, nothing has deterred their firm policy to fight this regional and global menace. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, Pakistan has not proven the same commitment. The government of Pakistan still lacks the appropriate law and order that is necessary to deter terrorist cells from looming and growing within their borders.

Over the past few days, it is becoming clearer that the terror units responsible for the attacks in India and Jammu and Kashmir were initiated and supported by elements in Pakistan. Leads are now pointing to the involvement of Lashkar-e-Tayiba, a terrorist organization that has received support from Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence.

This group is active in the anti-Indian insurgency in Kashmir. Although outlawed in Pakistan, it continues to function under other guises. In fact, their leader Hafiz Muhammad Saeed enjoys freedom in Pakistan despite this official ban on his organizations by the Pakistani administration.

Lashkar-e-Tayiba is also blamed for several other attacks on Indian soil in recent years, including the attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001 that almost instigated another war between the two countries. Since then, India and Pakistan have been engaged in peace talks over Kashmir. Violence had declined until recent weeks. Though no official deal over Kashmir has yet been made, talks between the countries have led to prisoner releases, increased tourist visas in each country, and bus and train links across the divided region of Kashmir.

However, Pakistan's failure to rein in terrorist organizations operating within its borders is threatening the peace process. Despite having vowed in 2004 not to allow any part of its territory to be used by terrorist groups such as Lashkar-e-Tayiba, the Pakistani government has simply watched while terrorist attacks took place in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India.

Pakistan has not implemented its promise to stop the terrorism. Acts of violence continue to occur on their watch, and the people of India and Kashmir are suffering. Pakistan must begin to demonstrate their commitment to the global war on terrorism. It must live up to its end of the bargain and control the violence. Otherwise, it will become exceedingly difficult for India to sustain the peace initiative.

Mr. Speaker, the spirit of the people of Mumbai and Jammu and Kashmir has demonstrated very strongly that terrorism cannot and will not succeed in destroying a people or a nation. My only hope is that these attacks strengthen the resolve of the government of Pakistan in combating Islamic terrorism. Pakistan must not let Islamic extremism undermine the peace process.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. FORBES) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

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

Eternal God and Father of all, source of life and health, keep us fit and able to accomplish Your holy will in all the trafficking of a busy day.

No secret is hidden from You, for every human soul is open to You. You are attentive to every prayer and know the beat of every wish that springs from a sincere heart.

Lord, grant Congress good judgment, and the President divine guidance, that peace and reconciliation may flourish upon the earth. We ask this, calling upon Your holy name, both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California 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.

STOP EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE

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

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, last year in the wake of the Supreme Court's Kelo v. New London decision, House Republicans drafted and passed legislation to better protect private property owners from eminent domain.

Today I rise seeking support for my effort to stop the potential for eminent domain abuse brought forth by last year's energy bill.

Permit holders now have the ability to petition U.S. District Court for authority to use eminent domain to construct power lines. This gives eminent domain power not to an accountable government agency, but rather to private companies.

In my Hudson Valley district, a company has a disruptive and damaging plan to place a power line from central New York all of the way to New Windsor, in spite of objections from numerous municipalities in its path.

Eminent domain is a tool that will likely be sought to advance this widely opposed plan. To end this threat, I am introducing a bill called the Protecting Communities from Power Line Abuse Act.

Let's value our constituents' rights to personal property. Cosponsor my bill and prevent efforts to abuse eminent domain and undermine our local communities.

CREATING PEACE

(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, we make war with such certainty, yet are befuddled how to create peace. This paradox requires reflection if we are to survive. Making and endorsing war requires a secret love of death, a fearful desire to embrace annihilation. Creating peace requires compassion, putting ourselves in the other person's place, and all of their suffering and all of their hopes, and to act from our heart's capacity for love, not fear.

The fight against terrorism in the 21st century is beginning to have the feel of the fight against communism in the 20th century, conjuring of enemies, scapegoating and wanton destruction. Our war on terror has become a war of error, so we blame the exercise, our capacity for warmaking. And because we have not yet begun to explore our capacity for peacemaking, we are reduced to a predatory voyeurism, once making war, watching war, being aghast at war, impotent to stop our own creation.

We are the most powerful Nation, but we do not have the power to reserve for ourself or to grant to our allies an exemption from the laws of cause and effect.

The fate of the world hangs in the balance, and until we consciously choose peace over war, life over death, the balance is tipping toward mutually assured destruction.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have demonstrated their commitment to immigration reform by passing a very strong border security bill that focus on strengthening our border and enforcing our law. I think that the House Republican bill does reflect the majority of Americans.

Unfortunately, Democrats have decided to go a different way. The Reid-Kennedy immigration bill would, one, allow as many as 60 million more immigrants over the next 20 years; two, Mexico would have to be consulted regarding construction of a barrier on our border; and, three, guaranteed Social Security benefits would be provided for illegal immigrants for the time they were in the country illegally.

So if an American citizen broke our Social Security laws, he or she would face jail time. But if an illegal immigrant broke the laws to get here and then broke our Social Security laws, we are going to reward them.

Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are doing the right thing by taking this issue to the Nation. We are holding hearings around the country to gain input from our citizens. Already a common theme we are hearing is that people would rather have no bill than a bad bill.

So in the interim, as Congress remains in a stalemate with the Democratic Senate bill, how about this as a concept: Enforce the current immigration laws.

REPUBLICAN CONGRESS IGNORES MIDDLE CLASS NEEDS

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, we are more than halfway through the year, and the Republican do-nothing Congress has yet to pass any meaningful legislation that will benefit America's middle class.

For too long, President Bush and his friends here in the Congress have worked exclusively on behalf of the CEOs and the most privileged in our Nation. But Democrats believe it is time to take our Nation in a new direction, one where America works for all Americans.

Thanks to the misplaced priorities of Washington Republicans, middle-class Americans are working for less today than they were when the recovery began in November 2001. While wages are stagnant, monthly bills have gone through the roof. College costs 40 percent more. Health care costs are 75 percent more, and gas prices have doubled. These dramatic increases have forced millions of hardworking Americans to take on debt.

And yet Washington Republicans continue to tout this economy. They really are out of touch. I think they have been spending way too much time at the country club. It is time that the voices of all Americans are heard, and that will only happen with a Democratic Congress.

RECOGNIZING EMILY LAWRIMORE

(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. Mr. Speaker, with the continuity of a congressional session, there is a normal shuffling of staff positions. Today, it is with mixed emotions that I announce the departure of Emily Lawrimore.

For the past year and a half, Emily has held one of the most difficult jobs on Capitol Hill, serving as the communications director in the office of the Second Congressional District of South Carolina.

Emily has handled her position with professionalism, grace and integrity. Her dedication and work ethic will be difficult to replace.

Emily began her career in Washington as a staff member of Congressman Charlie Norwood. She left the halls of Congress last Friday to become assistant press secretary for President George W. Bush. I am confident that Emily will be a welcome addition to the President's press office.

As a graduate of Clemson University, Emily Lawrimore is one of two children of Marshall and Cindy Lawrimore of Columbus, Georgia. She is a credit to the people of South Carolina and Georgia, and I wish her godspeed.

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

FILE FREEZE

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

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, in this age of electronic transactions, we are all highly vulnerable to having our identity stolen and our credit ruined. Americans deserve every tool available to help protect their identities and their credit.

And yet a data protection bill that passed out of the Committee on Financial Services and that is moving to this floor for a vote strips away the ability that consumers in 18 States have to control access to their credit reports at all times. It would allow consumers to freeze their files only after they are victims of identity theft, and that would absolutely do no good.

File freeze works because it stops the granting of new credit without the consumers' expressed permission. I urge my colleagues to help protect consumers' credit and identities. I urge them to cosponsor H.R. 5482 and join me in fighting for consumers to have the ability to freeze their own credit information.

SMALL BUSINESS BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to give the American people an update regarding what the House has done to implement the Small Business Bill of Rights.

Small businesses create 70 percent of all new jobs. In April of 2005, the House passed the Small Business Bill of Rights which provided a blueprint for Congress to help small businesses create new jobs. As the author of this legislation, I am pleased to report that the House has done its job in 2005.

In April, the House passed legislation repealing the death tax to allow family-owned small businesses to survive.

In July, the House passed association health plans to help small businesses with the skyrocketing cost of health insurance.

Also in July, the House passed four OSHA reform bills to help small businesses with red tape relief.

In October, the House cracked down on frivolous lawsuits by passing the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act and the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, which I authored.

Currently, all of these bills are stuck in the Senate and time is running out. I urge the Senate to act now to help small businesses by passing these legislative initiatives.

TIME TO MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, it is becoming an election year tradition: House Republicans bringing up hot-button issues that have absolutely no chance of ever becoming law.

This week, House Republicans will use pledge protection and gay marriage as a means to distract and divide our Nation. Are these really the priorities of the Republican majority when we have a hot spot virtually spinning out of control in the Middle East?

The truth is this is nothing but an attempt to turn attention away from their failures over the last year on the issues that are the most important to the majority of the American people.

Republicans have failed to join us in increasing the minimum wage, they have yet to provide any relief to the American consumer at the gas pump, they continue to stall negotiations on comprehensive border security and immigration reform, and they have allowed the issue of lobbying reform to fall off the legislative agenda after all

of the lobbying corruption we have witnessed over the last year from the other side of the aisle.

PREACH ON, MR. PRESIDENT

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, our President was caught on camera, on microphone, and off the cuff yesterday. He said: ''What they need to do is get Syria to get Hezbollah to stop doing this (nonsense), and it's over.''

He told Tony Blair he felt like telling U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to get on the phone with Syria's President and ''make something happen.'' After all, that's Annan's job.

What he said was the truth. I am glad we got to hear his candor, his straight talk, his no nonsense analyzing the problem: Syria can stop this border war.

He stated: ''Hezbollah is housed and encouraged by Syria and financed by Iran.''

Our President left out the politically correct niceties and cut to the chase.

Mr. President, preach on, preach on. The blunt blazing truth without any fluff is what needs to be said. We know who is behind the attacks against Israel and we know who can stop it. It is time all people of the world hold the aggressive Hezbollah terrorist thugs accountable for starting this border war.

And that's just the way it is.

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

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

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H.R. 4376, the Springfield Armory National Historic Site, Massachusetts Act of 2005. This legislation authorizes the National Park Service to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on behalf of the superb Springfield Technical Community College.

The Springfield Armory Museum is home to Longfellow's famous gun rack which inspired the arsenal at Springfield, home to the Springfield rifle, the Gerrand rifle, the site of Shay's rebellion and located on the Knox Trail which General Knox used and traversed as he moved to Boston and Dorchester for those fateful days of the American Revolution.

This legislation seeks to recognize and update the partnership between the Park Service and the college by authorizing the Park Service to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Commonwealth to provide financial assistance to the college for the purpose of maintaining, preserving, renovating and rehabilitating many of the historic structures within the Springfield National Historic Site.

This is a very important piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and it actually will allow a cooperative agreement to take place that will transform the complexion of what is also the site of the famous Olmstead Papers. I am grateful for this recognition that the House offered yesterday on behalf of these two individual sites.

□ 1015

REPUBLICAN ECONOMIC GROWTH

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share good news with the American people. Republicans' pro-growth economic agenda, combined with spending restraint, is driving the deficit down while pushing revenues up. In fact, if we can continue along this path of fiscal restraint, we will cut the deficit in half by the year 2008.

In addition to decreasing the deficit, the economy has created 2 million new jobs in the past year. In fact, over the past 3 years America has created more new jobs than Japan and all 25 members of the European Union combined.

Mr. Speaker, tax cuts are working. Our economy is strong and the deficit is down.

Republicans have been working tirelessly and successfully to push our economy in the right direction. Democrats, on the other hand, continue to push their tax and spend policies, a plan which is neither good for the family checkbook nor the American economy.

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Regional Health Forum that was held on July 7 in Los Angeles, California.

The Hispanic Caucus and Congressmember JOHN CONYERS from the Black Caucus came together with over 200 community activists to find a new direction to battle health care disparities in disadvantaged communities.

The new direction that we have adopted ensures quality health care that is accessible, affordable and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

An accessible and culturally sensitive health care system is critical to addressing conditions that disproportionately impact communities of color like, for example, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, HIV and AIDS, and mental illness. All these chronic illnesses affect our communities.

The new direction developed at the forum is one where community members, providers and policymakers at the local, State and Federal levels come together to collaborate to end health care disparities; and we plan for solutions in the next upcoming congressional session.

We came together with the Hispanic Caucus at this forum in Los Angeles, and we will continue to take the show on the road throughout the country to ensure that all Americans have a healthier system of health care.

IT IS TIME TO RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, the time for an increase in the minimum wage has not just arrived; it is long overdue. The national minimum wage has not been increased in 9 years. By year's end, 21 States across America will have a minimum wage exceeding the Federal minimum wage. Isn't it about time that we in Washington recognize the need to act, to level the playing field? Of course it is. The way things are going, we are not too far from the day when it will take an hour's labor just to pay for the gasoline to get to the job. Then, if you are like most people and you want to go back home after you work, it is going to take you another hour's wages, 2 hours just for transportation for the minimum-wage worker.

What is left for the other essentials of life, to put a roof over your head and food on your table? Not very much.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, we need to act now to increase the national minimum wage.

QUESTIONING REPUBLICAN PRIORITIES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, here are some of today's headlines:

''Toll Climbs in Mideast As Fighting Rages On.''

''Scores Killed in Bomb Attack Near Shiite Shrine.''

''Three U.S. Soldiers Killed on Monday.''

''Taliban Capture Two Afghan Towns.''

''Oil Futures At $75 a Barrel.''

''Wholesale Prices Climb 0.5 Percent in June.''

''Heat Wave Strains Electric Systems Nationwide.''

The Republican Congress's response is banning gay marriage. It is an obvious connection.

On this day nearly 2,000 years ago, Emperor Nero played his fiddle while Rome burned to the ground. This Congress would make the Emperor proud.

With all the challenges facing our Nation here at home and abroad, the Republican leadership is trying to distract the American people by playing the same old tunes, writing discrimination into the United States Constitution.

To govern is to choose, and the Republican Congress has made its priorities clear.

It is time for a new direction. It is time for a change.

MIDDLE EAST

(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, for several generations now we have watched Middle Eastern-born terrorism intimidate, maim and kill Americans and our allies around the free world.

The images coming out of Israel and Lebanon are a sad, ugly replay of something we have seen far too often. Mr. Speaker, there is no easy solution to this problem, despite what some pundits on the talk show circuit would tell us. This is a fight between a nation and between terrorists who claim no nation.

It is simply unacceptable that Iran would be permitted to fund a terrorist organization like Hezbollah. It is unacceptable that the state-sponsored terrorist organization would be placed in another nation, Lebanon, in order to wage a steady war against one of our allies. That is what has been happening for far too long.

Mr. Speaker, our President is exactly right not to condemn Israel for taking actions to defeat its terrorist enemy.

A CLUELESS CONGRESS

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, there is a conflagration in the Middle East. We are losing the war in Iraq. We are losing ground to the Taliban in Afghanistan. The stock market is crashing, gas prices are skyrocketing. We have raised the debt ceiling four times to $9 trillion, all of which we are going to dump on the backs of our children, who we are inadequately educating, let alone creating a safer world for them.

And what are the Republican congressional leadership's priorities? To ban same-sex marriage, to ban flag burning, to ban stem cell research, to ban child safety locks on guns in the home, to ban abortion here and family planning abroad, to protect the pledge of allegiance, to cut $20 billion from college student loan programs, to cut $9 billion from elementary and secondary education. And, oh, yes, more tax cuts.

Mr. Speaker, this has got to be the most clueless Congress in American history.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, last year this House passed the landmark stem cell bill, H.R. 810. We know that President Bush has already authorized research, even though it is arbitrary and artificially restricted, when he made his executive order allowing research on existing stem cell lines before 9 p.m. August 9, 2001, and prohibiting them after that date.

We know that in 2001 it was believed 78 stem cell lines existed. But now we know there are only 22 that are viable, and they have been contaminated with mouse stem cells.

We know that we are at a historic crossroad in Washington this week. We are either days away from this Congress passing this stem cell bill, or we are going to see delays for years. We know that this issue has united Americans into action across party lines. It includes over 80 Nobel Prize scientists. It counts hundreds of disease-fighting groups advocating for 110 million Americans who are afflicted with a genetic sentence to disability or death.

We know President Bush has signed over 1,000 bills into law. This is not the time to start with the Presidential roadblock of a veto.

TIME FOR A CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the Middle East is near all-out war and the United States is on the sidelines hamstrung by the Bush occupation of Iraq. We will borrow $1.3 billion today to run the government and hand the bill to our kids and grandkids.

Record gas prices are hamstringing family budgets and business. Record oil profits for the oil companies, and we are borrowing the money from Saudi Arabia and OPEC.

Now, these are difficult issues, and it would be tough to hammer out solutions here on the floor of the House, so the Republican majority has chosen to walk away from these issues of real concern to the American people and phony up an agenda full of dead-end bills designed for one purpose only, to excite the Republican right wing base and perpetuate their hegemony here in Congress.

Two fake stem cell bills to cover the first veto by this President of a meaningful stem cell bill that could provide relief to suffering Americans, paralyzed Americans, Americans with debilitating diseases. But, no, their ideologues won't allow that. They want medieval science to prevail here in Washington, D.C. It is time for a change in the leadership, to have a Congress that truly represents the needs of the American people, not a fringe element in this country.

MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 918 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 918

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to marriage. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour and 30 minutes of debate equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.J. Res. 88 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the joint resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 918 is a closed rule. It provides 1 hour and 30 minutes of debate in the House equally divided and controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader or their designees. This resolution waives all points of order against consideration of the joint resolution, it provides one motion to recommit, and it provides that during consideration of the joint resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the joint resolution to a time designated by the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 918 and the underlying joint resolution, H.J. Res. 88, the Marriage Protection Act.

First, I would like to thank Representative MARILYN MUSGRAVE, the author and lead sponsor of this constitutional amendment, for her steadfast commitment to the preservation of traditional marriage.

As the manager of this rule and an original cosponsor of the underlying joint resolution, I am very pleased the House will have an opportunity today to consider and debate this very important amendment to our Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, the proceeding debate, both on the rule and the underlying resolution, either can be divisive and disrespectful, or it can be respectful and productive. This amendment has nothing whatsoever to do with exclusion, but it has everything to do with protecting the traditional and historical definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

Contrary to what the opponents of this resolution might say today, this amendment will simply preserve the

traditional definition of marriage as it has existed for millennia.

I anticipate there will be those on the other side who will say this amendment was concocted for political purposes. To the contrary, Mr. Speaker. This amendment is in response to a few activist judges who are trying to throw out the definition of marriage, along with over 200 years of American judicial precedent.

□ 1030

These judges, and these judges alone, made this matter an issue, and they did so without one vote cast in either a legislature or at the ballot box. These activist judges substituted legal precedent and the will of the American people with their own personal desires and political beliefs. Their decision to scrap the traditional definition of marriage has forced us, forced us, to now consider enshrining the definition of marriage into our Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, like most of my colleagues, I would prefer to not have to address this issue in this manner. But, unfortunately, I know my constituents and a strong majority of the American people want us to defend the traditional definition of marriage. A poll by the New York Times, not exactly a bastion of right-wing conservatism, they found that 59 percent, I repeat, 59 percent, of Americans favor an amendment to the Constitution stating that marriage is a union between one man and one woman.

I also, sadly, realize this amendment will probably not have the necessary two-thirds majority to pass and opponents will cite this as a reason to not even consider the underlying resolution. We heard it in a couple of the 1-minute speeches from the other side just a few moments ago. Well, this vote will serve as an opportunity for each and every Member of this body to go on record in support or in opposition to protecting the traditional definition of marriage. And after this vote each of us will be judged accordingly by our constituents, and I can say with a clear conscience and without hesitation that I will support this rule, I will support the underlying resolution for the sake of the sacred institution of traditional marriage and for the sake of our precious children.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to encourage my colleagues to support the rule and this underlying resolution.

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia, Dr. GINGREY, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I very much regret that the Republican majority in this House has brought this bill to the floor. This bill, to put it simply and bluntly, is about adding discrimination and intolerance to the United States Constitution. This is about the Republican majority's once again trying to divide and polarize the Nation. It is about the Republican leadership's taking something that should be about love and turning it into a weapon of hate.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to be from Massachusetts, the home of the Nation's first State Constitution. In Massachusetts over 8,000 same-sex couples have been married since May of 2004, when it became legal. I should advise my colleagues that Massachusetts has not fallen off the map into the Atlantic Ocean. The sun still rises and sets in the Commonwealth. The Red Sox still play at Fenway, and life goes on. The only thing that is different is that couples of the same sex who love each other, want to spend the rest of their lives together, and want to get married can do so. It means that men and women who happen to be gay are able to enjoy the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as men and women who happen to be straight. And, Mr. Speaker, that is how it should be.

Those who have continued to advocate a ban on same-sex marriage are on the wrong side of history. There are some here who claim that they are on some sort of moral crusade to protect the institution of marriage. To them I say worry about your own marriage. I do not need you to protect mine. I have been happily married to the same woman for 17 years without the help or interference of Congress. What we should be protecting are the civil and human rights of all Americans.

The fact that same-sex marriage is legal in my home State has had no impact on my marriage except that we were invited to more weddings. Same-sex marriage is a threat to no institution, to no individual.

The underlying bill before us would not only add discrimination to the Constitution for the first time in our history. It would repeal, it would actually take away, the rights of thousands of Americans. What do the supporters of this bill say to the gay couples in Massachusetts who are now legally married; our family members, our neighbors, our coworkers, the people who sit next to us in church? Do you say your marriage is now meaningless and we are going to take away your rights? Do you say we are sending you back to second-class citizenship? Do you say that we have so much hatred for who you are that we are willing to tarnish the United States Constitution?

Marriage law in this country has traditionally been left to the States. Indeed, even in Massachusetts the same supreme judicial court that the proponents of this bill decry recently ruled that a referendum banning same-sex marriage can go forward. That referendum is currently working its way through the process. And I believe, of course, that the referendum should and will fail, that the citizens of Massachusetts would not vote to turn back the clock. But that should be up to us, Mr. Speaker, not to the people of Colorado or Georgia or anywhere else.

In addition, this bill jeopardizes not just same-sex marriage in Massachusetts but domestic partnership and civil union laws in other parts of the country. The proposal before us is so poorly drafted that legal experts disagree on exactly what effect it will have on those laws. That means, of course, that the issue will end up back in the courts, which is ironic given the concept of court-bashing by the bill's supporters.

Mr. Speaker, the impact of this debate goes far beyond constitutional arguments. The proponents of this bill are contributing to a climate of intolerance. We will hear protests from the other side today that they have no problem with gay people. Yet here they are arguing that gay people do not deserve the same rights as everybody else.

Mr. Speaker, I am also terribly troubled by the hate spewing from some of the outside groups using the same-sex marriage issue to whip up emotions and raise money. Mr. Speaker, some of the rhetoric is just deplorable. But I doubt that we will hear any of the bill's supporters denouncing it here today on the floor.

My colleagues, discrimination is discrimination, and it should find no sanctuary in our Constitution or in our hearts. It should find no sanctuary on the floor of the people's House.

We all know why this proposal is before us. It is an election year, and if it is an election year, the Republican leadership will find a place on the agenda for gay-bashing.

This proposal is worse than a distraction. It is not an assault on our fellow citizens. It is an attack on a piece of their humanity, and I urge you to stand on the right side of history and to defeat this bill.

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

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

In response to a couple of things that my good friend said, Mr. Speaker, nowadays lots of people are claiming that marriage is a discriminatory institution. Same-sex couples say marriage discriminates against them. Believe it or not, single people are now complaining that marriage discriminates also against them. After all, say the singles, why should the State give special benefits to married parents but not to us?

It gets worse. Even polygamists and believers in group marriage, who call themselves polyamorists, are saying that marriage discriminates against them.

Now, if the support society gives the men and women who have the potential to create children is going to be called discrimination, pretty soon there is not going to be such a thing as a marriage at all. When one group can call marriage discrimination, then any group can make the same claim.

And, also, Mr. Speaker, there was a comment about a couple loving each

other. But this is not a civil rights issue. Love, of course, is a great thing. But in my humble opinion, marriage is not just any kind of love. It is a love that can bear children, and it is a love that involves both a mom and a dad. Two men might be a good father. But neither one is a mom. The ideal for children is the love of both a mom and a dad. No same-sex couple can provide that. The ideal for marriage is about bringing together moms and dads so children have a mother and a father to learn from.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Representative VIRGINIA FOXX.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding me time.

I also want to thank my colleagues for seeing the great need for this debate, a need which is no longer on the horizon but has reached the forefront as it has begun to affect American families.

It is the right time to discuss a marriage protection amendment. As Members of this Congress, we have a responsibility to look at this critical situation for marriage and the real possibility that the courts are going to redefine marriage.

This constitutional amendment would concretely define marriage as we always have: as the union between one man and one woman. The disintegration of the family is the force behind so many of our most serious social problems. We cannot turn a blind eye to the social trends that are doing the most damage to America's children. The health of American families is built upon marriage, and it affects us all.

The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and other local courts have ruled in favor of same-sex marriages. These unsound decisions set a dangerous precedent, and that is why a constitutional amendment is necessary. If enacted, it will effectively ban these illegitimate marriages nationwide.

This definition of marriage is not intended to be discriminatory but rather to uphold the sanctity of marriage as an institution. The Marriage Protection Amendment removes the definition of marriage from the hands of the courts and returns this decision to the American people, where it belongs. The Massachusetts decision represents the beginning of what could be a dangerous erosion of this sacred tradition that we must protect.

Will we put our faith in a few unelected activist judges seated on a bench to define marriage, or will we use the most democratic process we have to affirmatively define marriage as it is intended? We must protect the sanctity of marriage now.

I encourage my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the rule and support the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to my beloved colleagues, what if a man and a woman have a partnership which does not produce children? Is their marriage invalid? Is it less sacred? And the use of the word ''illegitimate'' here is a little troubling because I thought we dispensed with those kinds of references as we became more enlightened.

It is easy to take a stand for the institution of marriage in the abstract, but try doing it in your own life and that becomes a little more complex. It is far easier to tell others how they should live and whom they should be permitted to marry. The science of human relations requires humility. Whether in the heights of unity or the depths of divorce, our relationships, our companionships, our partnerships, are our greatest teachers. Our relationships are also a sphere of influence which should be free from government interest or interference.

Government does not belong in the bedroom or secretly listening on your phone, reading your books, reviewing your e-mails. Government does not have a rightful role in determining who you should love, who should love whom, and therefore enter into the formalization of a civil marriage contract.

We do not often quote from the Declaration of Independence here, but I think it would be useful if I recited some words that are instructive at this moment:

''We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men,'' and we know now all people, ''are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.''

Thomas Jefferson went on to write that governments are created to secure these rights. I might add that this government was not created to crush those rights.

Today, with a proposed constitutional amendment defining marriage, we would establish a law which would be at odds with the 14th amendment, which guarantees equal protection of the law. What is next? Amend the Pledge of Allegiance to take out the words ''with liberty and justice for all''? What is next? Recarve the dais in front of us here, which has words carved into wood, and I will read them for those who are not able to see them: words carved below the Speaker: ''Tolerance,'' ''Justice,'' ''Union,'' ''Liberty''? Do we just take that apart?

□ 1045

Move it? Leave it blank?

You wonder why this Congress is not held in higher regard. I will tell you why. In Iraq, our troops are caught in a crossfire of a civil war which grows more deadly every day. The administration has no exit strategy. Congress does nothing.

In Iran, the Department of Defense is actively preparing for war while the administration sets the stage for negotiations that they intend to fail. Congress does nothing.

In the Middle East, the region stands on the brink of a full-blown war in which there will be no winners. Congress does nothing.

In North Korea, the administration won't negotiate with North Korea, while North Korea is thumbing its nose at the international community. Congress does nothing.

Here at home, you want to talk about a threat to the institution of marriage? 45 to 50 million people are without health insurance; bankruptcies at a record level; people in home foreclosures. Let's talk about a threat to the institution of marriage. Congress is doing nothing about any of that.

Today, in a shameless attempt to divert, distract, and distort from the lackluster performance of this Congress, the House is set to write discrimination into the U.S. Constitution. Iraq, Iran, the Middle East, North Korea, health care, gas prices, the minimum wage? No, the most pressing issue in America is gay marriage.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

The gentleman from Ohio is concerned and says, what next? Is the Congress going to take out from the Pledge of Allegiance ''with liberty and justice for all''? I say to my friend from Ohio, no. Later on this week we will have the opportunity to defend ''one Nation under God'' and keep the Federal judiciary from taking that out.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2¼ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HAYES).

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to defend traditional marriage. It is hard to believe that we have come to such a time in our country that we must even debate this basic American value.

Marriage is defined as the union between one man and one woman. Some may question whether or not this issue warrants a Federal debate and Federal action. Unfortunately, certain courts in this land have answered that question as ideological judges threaten to undo the very fabric of our families by imposing their opinions and policies as the final say on what marriage means.

Mr. Speaker, families matter, because fathers and mothers matter. They are not interchangeable. Literally hundreds of studies point to the crucial nature of mothers and fathers rearing children within the bonds of traditional marriage. Every deviation from the ideal model of enduring monogamous marriage between a man and a woman expands those boundaries; and when we push these limits, who is to say where the definition of marriage will end?

Government and societies have granted certain institutional benefits and privileges to heterosexual marriage because these unions have the biological potential to provide societies with a tangible benefit, children.

Mr. Speaker, redefining marriage to include same-sex unions not only devalues marriage, but it diminishes the rights of children. Nature itself gave children this right.

I wish that this fight here today was not necessary. We did not ask for it. But failure to enact a constitutional amendment will mean that the decisions made by the American people at the ballot box and through their elected representatives regarding marriage will continue to be overruled, bit by bit, by a few renegade judges and local officials. Unfortunately, when judges distort the Constitution to overrule the express will of the people, only constitutional amendments can overturn the judges.

Mr. Speaker, the people in the Eighth District of North Carolina have clearly and repeatedly asked me to defend traditional marriage, to do whatever it takes to ensure that the people have the final say. That is why I rise here today, convinced that this constitutional amendment is the right thing to do.

The time is now. Let's give American moms and dads the chance to protect marriage. I urge a ''yes'' vote on the rule and the Marriage Protection Amendment.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the 14th amendment, section 1, says that no one shall be denied equal protection of the laws. Now, if this would pass, would this legislation, this constitutional amendment, supersede that provision of the 14th amendment and make that provision of the 14th amendment null and void?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. It is not the province of the Chair to interpret the pending measure or to construe its relationship to the Constitution. Those are matters to be elucidated by Members in debate.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD at this time an article that appeared in the Economist magazine entitled ''The Case For Gay Marriage.''

I will insert into the RECORD an executive summary of the Cato Institute's policy analysis entitled: ''The Federal Marriage Amendment: Unnecessary, Anti-federalist and Antidemocratic.''

I would also like to insert into the RECORD a letter from the Human Rights Campaign in opposition to the bill before us, a letter from the American Jewish Committee in opposition to the bill before us, a letter from the National Council of Jewish Women in opposition to the bill before us, and a letter from the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights in opposition to the bill before us.

[From the Economist print edition, Feb. 26, 2004]

THE CASE FOR GAY MARRIAGE

IT RESTS ON EQUALITY, LIBERTY AND EVEN SOCIETY

So at last it is official: George Bush is in favour of unequal rights, big-government intrusiveness and federal power rather than devolution to the states. That is the implication of his announcement this week that he will support efforts to pass a constitutional amendment in America banning gay marriage. Some have sought to explain this action away simply as cynical politics, an effort to motivate his core conservative supporters to turn out to vote for him in November or to put his likely ''Massachusetts liberal'' opponent, John Kerry, in an awkward spot. Yet to call for a constitutional amendment is such a difficult, drastic and draconian move that cynicism is too weak an explanation. No, it must be worse than that: Mr. Bush must actually believe in what he is doing.

Mr. Bush says that he is acting to protect ''the most fundamental institution of civilisation'' from what he sees as ''activist judges'' who in Massachusetts early this month confirmed an earlier ruling that banning gay marriage is contrary to their state constitution. The city of San Francisco, gay capital of America, has been issuing thousands of marriage licences to homosexual couples, in apparent contradiction to state and even federal laws. It can only be a matter of time before this issue arrives at the federal Supreme Court. An those ''activist judges'', who, by the way, gave Mr. Bush his job in 2000, might well take the same view of the federal constitution as their Massachusetts equivalents did of their state code: that the constitution demands equality of treatment. Last June, in Lawrence v. Texas, they ruled that state anti-sodomy laws violated the constitutional right of adults to choose how to conduct their private lives with regard to sex, saying further that ''the Court's obligation is to define the liberty of all, not to mandate its own moral code''. That obligation could well lead the justices to uphold the right of gays to marry.

LET THEM WED

That idea remains shocking to many people. So far, only two countries—Belgium and the Netherlands—have given full legal status to same-sex unions, though Canada has backed the idea in principle and others have conferred almost-equal rights on such partnerships. The sight of homosexual men and women having wedding days just like those enjoyed for thousands of years by heterosexuals is unsettling, just as, for some people, is the sight of them holding hands or kissing. When The Economist first argued in favour of legalising gay marriage eight years ago (''Let them wed'', January 6th 1996) it shocked many of our readers, though fewer than it would have shocked eight years earlier and more than it will shock today. That is why we argued that such a radical change should not be pushed along precipitously. But nor should it be blocked precipitously.

The case for allowing gays to marry begins with equality, pure and simple. Why should one set of loving, consenting adults be denied a right that other such adults have and which, if exercised, will do no damage to anyone else? Not just because they have always lacked that right in the past, for sure: until the late 1960s, in some American states it was illegal for black adults to marry white ones, but precious few would defend that ban now on grounds that it was ''traditional''. Another argument is rooted in semantics: marriage is the union of a man and a woman, and so cannot be extended to same-sex couples. They may live together and love one another, but cannot, on this argument, be ''married''. But that is to dodge the real question—why not?—and to obscure the real nature of marriage, which is a binding commitment, at once legal, social and personal, between two people to take on special obligations to one another. If homosexuals want to make such marital commitments to one another, and to society, then why should they be prevented from doing so while other adults, equivalent in all other ways, are allowed to do so?

CIVIL UNIONS ARE NOT ENOUGH

The reason, according to Mr. Bush, is that this would damage an important social institution. Yet the reverse is surely true. Gays want to marry precisely because they see marriage as important: they want the symbolism that marriage brings, the extra sense of obligation and commitment, as well as the social recognition. Allowing gays to marry would, if anything, add to social stability, for it would increase the number of couples that take on real, rather than simply passing, commitments. The weakening of marriage has been heterosexuals' doing, not gays', for it is their infidelity, divorce rates and single-parent families that have wrought social damage.

But marriage is about children, say some: to which the answer is, it often is, but not always, and permitting gay marriage would not alter that. Or it is a religious act, say others: to which the answer is, yes, you may believe that, but if so it is no business of the state to impose a religious choice. Indeed, in America the constitution expressly bans the involvement of the state in religious matters, so it would be especially outrageous if the constitution were now to be used for religious ends.

The importance of marriage for society's general health and stability also explains why the commonly mooted alternative to gay marriage—a so-called civil union—is not enough. Vermont has created this notion, of a legally registered contract between a couple that cannot, however, be called a ''marriage''. Some European countries, by legislating for equal legal rights for gay partnerships, have moved in the same direction (Britain is contemplating just such a move, and even the opposition Conservative leader, Michael Howard, says he would support it). Some gays think it would be better to limit their ambitions to that, rather than seeking full social equality, for fear of provoking a backlash—of the sort perhaps epitomised by Mr. Bush this week.

Yet that would be both wrong in principle and damaging for society. Marriage, as it is commonly viewed in society, is more than just a legal contract. Moreover, to establish something short of real marriage for some adults would tend to undermine the notion for all. Why shouldn't everyone, in time, downgrade to civil unions? Now that really would threaten a fundamental institution of civilisation.

[From Policy Analysis, June 1, 2006]

THE FEDERAL MARRIAGE AMENDMENT UNNECESSARY, ANTI-FEDERALIST, AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC

(By Dale Carpenter)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Members of Congress have proposed a constitutional amendment preventing states from recognizing same-sex marriages. Proponents of the Federal Marriage Amendment claim that an amendment is needed immediately to prevent same-sex marriages from being forced on the nation. That fear is even more unfounded today than it was in 2004, when Congress last considered the FMA. The better view is that the policy debate on

same-sex marriage should proceed in the 50 states, without being cut off by a single national policy imposed from Washington and enshrined in the Constitution.

A person who opposes same-sex marriage on policy grounds can and should also oppose a constitutional amendment foreclosing it, on grounds of federalism, confidence that opponents will prevail without an amendment, or a belief that public policy issues should only rarely be determined at the constitutional level.

There are four main arguments against the FMA. First, a constitutional amendment is unnecessary because federal and state laws, combined with the present state of the relevant constitutional doctrines, already make court-ordered nationwide same-sex marriage unlikely for the foreseeable future. An amendment banning same-sex marriage is a solution in search of a problem.

Second, a constitutional amendment defining marriage would be a radical intrusion on the nation's founding commitment to federalism in an area traditionally reserved for state regulation, family law. There has been no showing that federalism has been unworkable in the area of family law.

Third, a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage would be an unprecedented form of amendment, cutting short an ongoing national debate over what privileges and benefits, if any, ought to be conferred on same-sex couples and preventing democratic processes from recognizing more individual rights.

Fourth, the amendment as proposed is constitutional overkill that reaches well beyond the stated concerns of its proponents, foreclosing not just courts but also state legislatures from recognizing same-sex marriages and perhaps other forms of legal support for same-sex relationships. Whatever one thinks of same-sex marriage as a matter of policy, no person who cares about our Constitution and public policy should support this unnecessary, radical, unprecedented, and overly broad departure from the nation's traditions and history.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2006.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign (''HRC''), our nation's largest civil rights organization promoting equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (''GLBT'') Americans, I write to urge you to vote no on H.J. Res. 88, a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution that would write discrimination into our Constitution and brand lesbian and gay families as second-class citizens in every state in our nation.

Our Constitution was written to promote liberty, equality, and fairness. ''We, the people'' means all of the people. By singling out a group of Americans for unequal treatment, the federal marriage amendment (''FMA'') would undermine the guiding principles of our Constitution. Constitutional amendments have expanded rights for Americans, including voting rights, religious liberty, and equal protection. Discrimination has no place in our nation's founding document.

The proposed amendment's supporters and drafters disagree over whether it would ban the civil union and domestic partnership protections that several states and cities have extended to same-sex couples. Sixty percent of Americans agree that all families should be able to protect one other in times of crisis, whether to take care of a sick family member, share retirement savings, of make important decisions on the death of a partner. The FMA could render laws that provide these protections unconstitutional, hurting real American families.

Americans prioritize fairness over discrimination. Congress should focus on fairness, and abandon the divisive politics behind the FMA. With gas prices rising and issues related to health care and education on the minds of Americans, Congress should not be spending its time seeking to discriminate against a group of Americans and treating them differently under the law in our Constitution.

Your ''no'' vote on the FMA is a vote against discrimination and for the values that belong in our Constitution: liberty, equality, and fairness.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact David Stacy at 202.572.8959 or Lara Schwartz at 202.216.1578.

Sincerely,

JOE SOLMONESE,
President.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2006.

Re: Marriage Protection Amendment (H.J. Res. 88)

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Jewish Committee, the nation's oldest human relations organization with over 150,000 members and supporters represented by 33 regional offices nationwide, I urge you to oppose the Marriage Protection Amendment (H.J. Res. 88). If passed, this legislation would amend the U.S. Constitution to provide that marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union between a man and a woman. The amendment would also prevent both the federal and state constitutions from being interpreted to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof shall be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.

The Marriage Protection Amendment would mark the first time the Constitution has been amended to include discrimination. It is a threat to the fundamental rights of many Americans and would only serve to enshrine discrimination in our social fabric.

Moreover, the Marriage Protection Amendment would imperil civil union and similar provisions that have been adopted in some states. While AJC takes no position on state recognition of same-sex marriage per se, AJC believes that same-sex couples who choose to enter into domestic arrangements such as civil unions should be afforded the same legal rights, benefits, protections and obligations conferred upon heterosexual couples who enter into civil marriage.

We therefore urge you to oppose H.J. Res. 88 in order to protect against enshrining discrimination in the Constitution.

Thank you for considering our views on this important matter.

Respectfully,

RICHARD T. FOLTIN,
Legislative Director and Counsel.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN,
July 17, 2006.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 90,000 members and supporters of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), I am writing in opposition to the federal marriage amendment (H.J. Res 39). The federal marriage amendment also threatens fundamental constitutional rights such as religious liberty and domestic violence protections.

A ban on same-sex marriage would set a dangerous precedent by amending the Constitution to restrict the rights of a specific class of people. Furthermore, the proposed language is vague and would consequently jeopardize existing state recognized civil unions. To deny couples in committed relationships the same legal benefits accorded spouses in heterosexual marriages is prejudicial, morally offensive, and goes against the spirit of a free democracy.

Passage of the vague language within H.J. Res. 39 would also have broader consequences for all unmarried Americans. For instance, in Ohio, the media reports that some people are losing the protection of domestic violence laws based on that state's marriage amendment. The federal marriage amendment, which has almost identical language, would create similar ambiguities that would endanger protections for non-married victims, potentially reduce criminal penalties, and invalidate many state and local statues. This law would inadvertently help those who hurt others by complicating established laws in place to protect victims of violence.

In addition, the passage of H.J. Res. 39 would jeopardize religious liberty. To date, no administrative or judicial decision in any state or locale requires a religious group to perform any marriage against its will. The proposed amendment, on the other hand, would impose a single, religious definition of marriage upon the entire nation. Central to religious autonomy is the ability to choose who can take part in important religious rituals or services, including marriage. For the government to interfere in this process and show preference to one particular religion's point of view would significantly undermine the separation of religion and state.

NCJW is a volunteer organization, inspired by Jewish values, that works to improve the quality of life for women, children, and families and to ensure individual rights and freedoms for all. As such, we believe that gay and lesbian individuals should have the constitutional right to affirm and protect their relationships through marriage. We endorse laws that would provide equal rights for same-sex couples.

Enshrining discrimination in a document whose purpose is to safeguard rights and freedoms is wrong. I urge you to vote to defeat this bill.

Sincerely,

PHYLLIS SNYDER,
NCJW President.

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ON CIVIL RIGHTS,
WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 14, 2006.

Oppose the ''Federal Marriage Amendment'' (H.J. Res. 88) Don't Write Discrimination into the Constitution

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), the nation's oldest, largest, and most diverse civil and human rights coalition, we strongly urge you to oppose the ''Federal Marriage Amendment'' (H.J. Res. 88), a radical proposal that would permanently write discrimination into the United States Constitution. LCCR believes that this highly divisive amendment is a dangerous and unnecessary approach to resolving the ongoing debate over same-sex marriage, and that it would turn 225 years of constitutional history on its head by requiring that states actually restrict the civil rights of their own citizens.

As a diverse coalition, LCCR does not take a position for or against same-sex marriage. The issue of same-sex marriage is an extremely difficult and sensitive one, and people of good will can and do have heartfelt differences of opinion on the matter. However, LCCR strongly believes that there are right and wrong ways to address the issue as a matter of public policy, and is extremely concerned about any proposal that would alter our nation's most important document for the direct purpose of excluding any individuals from its guarantees of equal protection.

The proposed amendment is antithetical to one of the Constitution's most fundamental guiding principles, that of the guarantee of equal protection for all. For the first time in

history, the Constitution would be altered to be used as a tool of exclusion, restricting the rights of a group of Americans. It is so far-reaching that it would not only prohibit states from granting equal marriage rights to same-sex couples, but also may deprive same-sex couples and their families of fundamental protections such as hospital visitation, inheritance rights, and health care benefits, whether conveyed through marriage or other legally recognized relationships. Such a proposal runs afoul of basic principles of fairness and will do little but harm real children and real families in the process.

Constitutional amendments are extremely rare, and are only done to address great public policy needs. Since the Bill of Rights' adoption in 1791, the Constitution has only been amended seventeen times. LCCR believes that the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments were designed largely to protect and expand individual liberties, and certainly not to deliberately take away or restrict them.

LCCR is particularly troubled by the virulent rhetoric of some organizations working to enact the proposed amendment, and their animus towards gays and lesbians. The attacks made by many of the most vocal proponents, such as the Traditional Values Coalition and the American Family Association, are disturbingly similar to the sorts of attacks that have been made upon other communities as the have attempted to assert their right to equal protection of the laws. This is, of course, an element of the debate that the civil rights community finds deeply disturbing, as should all fair-minded Americans.

In addition, supporters of the Federal Marriage Amendment cite ''judicial activism'' as a reason to enact it. Terms like ''judicial activism'' are alarming to LCCR and the civil rights community because such labels have routinely been used in the past to attack judges who made courageous decisions on civil rights matters. When Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote the unanimous Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Board of Education (1954), for example, defenders of segregation cried ''judicial activism'' across the South and across the country. Many groups and individuals demanded that Congress ''impeach Earl Warren.'' The Supreme Court's ruling in Loving v. Virginia (1967), which invalidated a state anti-miscegenation law, resulted in similar attacks. Fortunately, our nation avoided taking any radical measures against the so-called ''judicial activists'' or their decisions, and we believe a similar level of caution is warranted in this case.

At a time when our nation has many great and pressing issues, Congress can ill afford to exert time and energy on such a divisive and discriminatory constitutional amendment. We implore you to focus on the critical needs facing our nation, and to publicly oppose this amendment. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Rob Randhava, LCCR Counsel, at (202) 466–6058, or Nancy Zirkin, LCCR Deputy Director, at (202) 263–2880. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

A. Philip Randolph Institute, American Association of People with Disabilities, American Civil Liberties Union, American Humanist Association, American Jewish Committee, Americans for Democratic Action, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Anti-Defamation League, Asian American Justice Center (formerly known as NAPALC), Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL–CIO, Association of Humanistic Rabbis, Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, Central Conference of American Rabbis, Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Global Rights, Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Human Rights Campaign, Jewish Labor Committee.

Korean American Resource & Cultural Center (KRCC), Korean Resource Center (KRC), Lambda Legal, League of United Latin American Citizens, League of Women Voters of the United States, Legal Momentum, Metropolitan Washington Employment Lawyers Association, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), National Association of Human Rights Workers, National Association of Social Workers, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of La Raza, National Disability Rights Network, National Education Association, National Employment Lawyers Association, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, National Jewish Democratic Council, National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC).

National Partnership for Women & Families, National Urban League, National Women's Law Center, People For the American Way, PFLAG National (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Project Equality, Inc., Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFCW, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Society for Humanistic Judaism, The Interfaith Alliance, Union for Reform Judaism, Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, United States Student Association, Women Employed, Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring, YWCA USA.

Mr. Speaker, let me also just say in response to some of the speakers who have come before us who have talked about gay marriage as somehow going against the will of the people, I will tell you that in Massachusetts, where gay marriage has been legal now for over 2 years, I think the majority of the people are absolutely fine with it. Over 8,000 gay couples have been married, and life goes on. Nothing has changed. The only thing that has changed is that people in gay relationships can enjoy the same rights and privileges and responsibilities as those who are in heterosexual relationships.

I would also say to my colleagues that if you are so worried about defending the institution of marriage, then I think we should all worry about our own marriages. In Massachusetts, I should point out for the record that we have the lowest divorce rate in the country. So maybe we know something about marriage that maybe you don't.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

The gentleman from Massachusetts I am sure is aware of the fact that in his State, opponents have gathered 170,000 signatures supporting a constitutional amendment they hope would end gay marriage, despite what their supreme court did.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY).

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, we must defend traditional marriage. Marriage, family and community are not catch phrases. They are the backbone of our American society. Sadly, however, there is an organized effort by judicial activists and the radical left in this country to destroy our traditional American culture.

The Federal Marriage Amendment provides a national definition of marriage and leaves marriage laws to the State legislatures. It adds a layer of protection against court-imposed arrangements other than marriage and protects States from being forced to recognize same-sex unions created by other States.

Years of social science evidence confirms that children respond best when their mom and dad are married and live in the home. That is why it is important that we defend traditional marriage and this traditional notion of family law that emphasizes the importance of the foundational principle of family and to address the needs of children in the most positive and effective way.

We must defend what is sacred in our Nation against reckless actions of a dangerous few who seek to impose their liberal lunacy on our society. That is why we must fight for families, and this is a war worth fighting.

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

Mr. Speaker, let me say that I used to think that what was sacred in this country was defending civil rights and civil liberties and fighting against discrimination. Apparently I am mistaken, based on the comments that I have just heard.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and rise this morning in strong opposition to the rule before us. I hope later today to return to the floor and address the substance of Federal Marriage Amendment. But now I want to speak to this process, because by bringing up this unnecessary and divisive amendment to write discrimination into the Constitution, the leadership of this House once again illustrates just how out of step Congress is with the rest of America.

With the defeat of the amendment in the Senate a mere 5 weeks ago, this legislation should have never reached the floor of the House. Yet, unsurprisingly, politics is prevailing over common sense, and today we are going to be hearing a lot of hurtful political rhetoric targeting gay and lesbian families, all for the purpose of pandering to a narrow political base.

Mr. Speaker, America faces great challenges, both at home and abroad. We are confronted with record high gas prices, an endless and expensive war in Iraq, skyrocketing health care costs, and a growing international crisis in the Middle East and North Korea. But the Federal Marriage Amendment allowed under this rule, of course, does nothing to address these very pressing challenges.

At a time of such great tests confronting our Nation, America's leaders should be uniting, rather than dividing, our country. But the FMA does exactly the opposite of that, and it certainly puts politics ahead of real progress.

The Federal Marriage Amendment is also unnecessary. Since 2004, States around the country have been addressing the issue of gay marriage through the normal legislative and governmental process. Today, Massachusetts remains the only State that allows gay marriage. But several other States, including Vermont, Connecticut and California, have passed laws granting civil union protections for same-sex couples. Those laws would certainly be threatened if this amendment were to pass.

The proposed FMA limits the ability of States to confer protections such as important rights like hospital visitation rights, health insurance and broader civil union or domestic partnership protections on unmarried couples, and it undermines our federalist tradition of deferring to the States to regulate the institution of marriage.

Mr. Speaker, many Americans are struggling with the issue of same-sex marriage on a personal level today. There is a vibrant debate going on across our Nation, in church basements, in break rooms, in dining rooms. This debate would be completely shutdown and stifled if this amendment were to pass.

Our Constitution, the most cherished document embodying the American Dream of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, should not be amended to single out and deny the rights of any one group of Americans. This divisive, hateful, and unnecessary amendment is unworthy of our great Constitution that has been the foundation of our great Nation.

I urge my colleagues to reject this rule and to vote against the amendment.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin that 45 States currently define marriage as a union of one man and one woman or expressly prohibit same-sex marriages; and those 45 States we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, include 88 percent of the population of this country. We are not just talking about Georgia. The fact is in a constitutional amendment, three-fourths of the States will have to ratify it.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GINGREY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. McGOVERN. If all these States are doing what you want them to do, why do we need a Federal constitutional amendment?

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, it is because of these activist judges who are chipping away at the will of the people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the definition of a marriage as between one man and one woman. I think really what we are doing on the floor today is determining how America will define itself. Thousands of years and many civilizations have defined a marriage as the union between one man and one woman. With few exceptions, those civilizations that did not follow that perished.

Forty-five States, as the gentleman just said, have determined by people that were elected by the people of that State that marriage is the definition of one man and one woman. So, today, we are really on the floor to debate whether America will continue to define itself and the definition of marriage on a godly institution that was established thousands and thousands of years ago that one man and one woman would come together and become one and produce families, families that all across America have said that the definition of marriage is between one man and one woman.

I urge my colleagues today to define America as a moral country.

□ 1100

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Massachusetts for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, you know we have a conflagration in the Middle East today as we speak. We have raised the debt ceiling four times to over $9 trillion, and we are going to pass it all on to our kids. And yet this is how the Republican congressional leadership chooses to spend its time.

Nobody's marriage is endangered. What this is really about and what this amendment should be entitled is the ''Gay Discrimination Act.'' That is all it is. And what is its motivation? It is a crass political attempt to divide America in an election year. That is what this is all about. We know it. And I suspect a lot of the American people know it as well.

What every American should find most objectionable is that you are using the Constitution to do this. Our Founding Fathers put together the Constitution and the Bill of Rights in order to protect and enhance individual rights and liberties. And this goes directly counter to what our Constitution is all about by prohibiting individual rights and limiting States rights.

They talked about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. And, yet, all you can think about is ways to make life more difficult for people who do not fall into the mainstream of America. That is not what America is about. This amendment needs to be defeated and we need to stand up for human rights, for civil rights, and for States rights.

We know it is never going to get enacted. But we should not be spending our time talking about it. We should not be spending our time trying to seek political gain at the expense of people who want to live committed lives with each other. That is not endangering anybody. Defeating this amendment is what our Founding Fathers wanted America to be about.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Federal Marriage Amendment, and I do so for one simple reason—the United States Constitution must never be allowed to expressly authorize, indeed to expressly direct, discrimination against a group of individuals that is based upon their shared personal characteristics

Mr. Speaker, this amendment shouldn't be called the Marriage Protection Amendment. It isn't needed to strengthen or enhance the institution or traditional marriage in this country.

Call it what it is—it's the Anti-Gay Marriage Amendment, for it is intended to deny gay and lesbian Americans, solely on the basis of their orientation, the ability to maintain the same kind of committed relationships that every other adult in the country is entitled to.

This is discrimination in its rankest form.

The amendment is the first of its kind, for it seeks to change the Constitution, not to prohibit, but to authorize a specific form of discrimination.

And it does this by forever preventing the states from extending the rights and protections of marriage to a certain class of citizens.

States would be denied the right to recognize and afford same sex couples the legal rights and protection that heterosexual couples receive from government, such as the right to receive health benefits and hospital visitations.

Furthermore, those states that have already seen fit to recognize and enact domestic partnership state laws would be preempted by this amendment.

Never, however, has the Constitution, on its face, been amended to deny a specific set of rights to a specific class of citizens.

By approving this measure, the House would be party to act that would stand as an extraordinary affront to the Constitution and, especially, to the Bill of Rights and the fundamental principles and protections it enshrines.

This is not what the Constitution is about; this is not what our country is about. The amendment should be seen for what it is—a crass attempt to politically divide the American public in an election year. It must be soundly defeated, and I urge my colleagues to do so.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the gentleman from Virginia that it is not all about money and how we spend it that we are in this Congress, but it is also about values and how this great country represents them to the world, not the least of which is the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS).

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague also for his point that values are important here in Congress. That is why we are here. So I rise in support of the rule and support of the amendment.

In 1996, we passed in Congress the Defense of Marriage Act, DOMA, so this is not a new issue, back in 1996 to protect the institution of marriage.

Unfortunately, DOMA does not go far enough to protect States from courts that choose to drastically alter marriage laws. This amendment is greatly supported, greatly supported by the majority of Americans. As pointed out earlier, 20 States, 20 States voted and elected to define marriage as between a man and a woman by overwhelming majorities.

On average, these States have approved constitutional amendments with 70 percent approval ratings. Additionally, 23 other States have enacted laws that similarly limit marriage to unions between a man and a woman, and my State is among them, Florida. Yet, not one State, I say to my colleagues over there, not one State has chosen by popular vote to permit marriages between homosexuals. Explain that to me. Why, if there is so much concern over there, why a State has not permitted it?

Without this amendment, activist judges would be able to force recognition of same-sex marriage upon States that have democratically voted not to sanction these unions. This is a miscarriage of judicial power. I urge my colleagues to support the democratic process and support the Federal marriage amendment.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, just for the record, there is no Federal challenge at this time in any Federal court to DOMA. So that not is not even an issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER).

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I probably perform more marriages than all of the other Members in this body, collected. When I perform a wedding in Los Angeles in August, it will push me over the 400 mark for my career as an ordained United Methodist pastor.

I am baffled over what is taking place on this floor. When Rome ruled the world, every now and then Roman soldiers had to go back to Rome and pledge loyalty to the Emperor. It was called sacramentum. In my tradition, the Christian tradition, we took that word to use as our word sacrament, our pledge of loyalty to God.

The generic marriage ceremony, which almost every denomination uses, begins by saying, marriage is an honorable estate instituted by God and signifies to all the uniting of this man and this woman in His church.

The point, Mr. Speaker, is that the domain of the church is the place where definitions should be made with regard to marriage. Every denomination has struggled or is struggling with this issue. The United Methodist Church voted last year not to allow same-sex marriages. The Episcopalian Church voted to do the same.

I resent a body of legislators telling me, a member of a denomination, that they will decide who can and who cannot get married. It is the responsibility of the church not the Government. If the Government is going to become involved in this sacrament, then why not communion? Why does the Congress not then begin to deal with how many times a month a church should do communion?

Friends, this is the saddest day for me since I have been here, because I can see clearly that this body is willing to trespass on the domain of God. Marriage is a holy institution. It was created by God. And we say in my tradition that Jesus ordained and beautified marriage when he performed his first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, not on the floor of Congress.

The church controls this issue. If this body would like to move to have the civil marriages restricted, that is fine. People who want to go to the courthouse, or want to get married on a ship, that is fine. But in terms of the church, keep your hands out of the church.

The church is a sacred institution. I did not come to this floor to make enemies but to make a point. And my point is this. This is off base. This is wrong. I wish we had time to debate the theology of this issue, because I would do it with anybody in this place.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 45 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know that I could debate theology with the gentleman from Missouri, as an ordained minister, but I do know a little bit about the sacrament of marriage, Mr. Speaker, as one of about 200 Catholic Members of the United States Congress.

I think God has spoken very clearly, very clearly on this issue. And I would refer the gentleman to Holy Scripture, and what the word says in regard to marriage and the sanctity of marriage. I think it is pretty clear.

The gentleman wants to talk about the fact that this should be a church issue. I agree with you. I wish it were, if it were not for these activist Federal judges and these public officials. I will remind the gentleman from Missouri, the good Reverend, that they will be the one that would be performing these marriages and they would do it to a fare-thee-well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN).

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, the argument on the floor that somehow this is a church issue misses this point entirely. We are talking about the legal implications, and whether or not the Government of the United States can recognize a preferential status for marriage between one man and one woman.

Now, is this unprecedented? No, it is not. Read your American history. The State of Utah was not allowed to become a State until they recognized marriage as being only between one man and one woman. That had to do with whether you could have multiple partners.

This is a different aspect of that question, but essentially the legal basis is the same. And that is what we are talking about here. Those who wish to change this, as these activist judges do, carry the burden of arguing why we should change an institution which has stood the test of time for thousands of years.

There are reasons for this in terms of it being the most stable unit of society upon which our society has found itself in need. That is what we are talking about. It is not discrimination. It is allowing the existence of a definition of the most fundamental unit of society. That is it simply. We are not intruding in the province of churches.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to clarify something about the activist judges. Since 1953, since Eisenhower was sworn into office, there have been 23 Federal judges appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. Of that amount, 17 have been Republicans, 6 have been Democrats. The Court today has 7 Republicans, and 2 Democrats.

I do not know who they are blaming. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. Mr. Speaker, I am a cosponsor of this amendment. And I rise today with some serious concerns. First, I am concerned about the use of faith and marriage to score political points. I am also concerned about the scope of the amendment.

First, I will talk about the amendment's scope. In my opinion, the amendment limits its ability to truly protect marriage. As written, the amendment defines marriage between a man and a woman. Sounds good, but I do not think that alone will be good enough to fully protect marriage.

Mr. Speaker, it is my belief that the amendment does not go far enough. If we truly want to protect marriage, we should look and do all the things we must to go after the evils that threaten each and everyone of our marriages. These are the evils of divorce, adultery and abuse.

The amount of divorce that has occurred in this country has become a threat to marriage. What do our children learn when they see their parents getting divorced left and right, only to remarry and get divorced again? What kind of example does it set?

This occurrence clearly undermine the values that are the foundation of every marriage. Of course I am speaking of the commonly recited tenet, ''Till death do us part.'' Marriage is for life. This amendment needs to include that basic tenet.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think we should expand the scope of the amendment to outlaw divorce in this country. Going further, Mr. Speaker, I believe infidelity, adultery, is an evil that threatens the marriage and the heart

of every marriage, which is commitment.

How can we as a country allow adulterers to go unpunished and continue to make a mockery of marriage? Again, by doing so, what lessons are we teaching our children about marriage? I certainly think that it shows we are not serious about protecting the institution and this is why I think the amendment should outlaw adultery and make it a felony.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, we must address spousal abuse and child abuse. Think of how many marriages end in divorce or permanent separation because one spouse is abusive. And, Mr. Speaker, I personally think child abuse may be the most despicable act one can commit.

This is why if we are truly serious about protecting marriage to the point where we will amend the Constitution, we should extend the punishment of abuse to prevent those who do such a heinous act from ever running for an elected position anywhere.

We should also prevent those who commit adultery or get a divorce from running for office. Mr. Speaker, this House must lead by example. If we want those watching on C–SPAN to actually believe we are serious about protecting marriage, then we should go after the other major threats to the institution, not just the threats that homosexuals may some day be allowed to marry in a State other than Massachusetts, and elected officials should certainly lead by example.

Now for my second concern, Mr. Speaker. As a person of faith who has been blessed with a wonderful marriage of 42 years, I am deeply troubled that some may be using this amendment to score political points with their base.

Why else would we be voting for an amendment that has no chance of becoming law since the Senate has already rejected it? Why else would we vote on an amendment that may not be necessary, when you consider that 45 States have enacted either constitutional or statutory bans on gay marriage? And other States, like my home State of Tennessee, have put such bans on the ballot in November.

Why, too, would Congressional Quarterly in their July 17, 2006 issue, report this amendment is a part of the legislative values agenda rolled out to rally the GOP base in the run-up to the November elections?

Just as one should not take the Lord's name in vain, I also believe a good value for folks is to never undermine religion or marriage by using them to score political points with the base in order to win elections.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I think it is time for both parties to stop pandering to the bases that live on the political fringes and instead remember that there is one more true base: the American people. The people I represent would be more motivated if we could address the cost of $3 a gallon gasoline, and cut it in half, reduce the cost of health care for a family of four from $1,000 it currently costs for a family, increase the minimum wage from $5.15 to $7.25 an hour, address the illegal immigration, reduce budget deficits and balance our budget.

□ 1115

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 15 seconds.

My good friend, the gentleman from Tennessee, decried politics, and then he started his remarks about politics. He talked about whether these judges were Republican judges and Democratic judges and gave numbers.

In response to him, we are blaming activist judges, whether they are Democratically appointed or Republican appointees, who are attempting by judicial fiat to redefine our constitutional definition of marriage which has stood for 223 years.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1¼ minutes to my good friend from Texas, who has been married to his lovely wife for 37 years, Judge John Carter.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Georgia. We have now made 38.

Mr. Speaker, anywhere in the world today you can wake somebody up in the middle of the night, you pick them, and you say, excuse me, wake up just a second. What is a marriage? They will say a union between a man and a woman.

This is a confused world that we are trying to define here. The reality is marriage has always been a union between a man and a woman. Now, in China they might say a civil union. In Rome they might say a church union, but it has always been a union between a man and a woman.

In my faith, I believe it is part of God's plan for the future of mankind. The sacredness of a marriage is based, to this Nation, and, quite frankly, every Nation on Earth, it is how the base governing we have in our lives starts.

Mr. Speaker, that is why this should be a part of the United States Constitution. When activist judges would go try to change the real world, it is our job to step up and stand up for the moral values of this Nation.

This is why I support this rule, and I support the legislation and the constitutional amendment to follow.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I honor the long-term marriages of my colleagues, all, in this Congress, but this so-called Marriage Protection Amendment isn't about trying to reduce the divorce rate, or it is not about helping married couples work through their problems. This bill is about keeping two adults from making a life-long commitment to each other. With everything that is happening in this world, it seems like this should be the least of our worries.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the majority party to quit intruding on our private lives and start working on the issues that really matter to the American people and to their families. The American public wants us to work together, to bring our soldiers home from Iraq, to address the rising cost of gas, to raise the minimum wage.

Faced with such important issues, amending the Constitution to decide what we should do in our private lives is nothing more than a cheap stunt.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I proudly yield 2 minutes now to the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. RYUN), who has been married 37½ years.

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this rule and the underlying legislation, House Joint Resolution 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

It is on behalf of the many families of the Second District of Kansas that I urge my colleagues to give our State legislators the opportunity to ratify the definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

Mr. Speaker, we have reached a point in history where some have forgotten that it is the family, not the government, that is the fundamental building block of our society. This constitutional amendment would be entirely unnecessary were it not for the activist judges who are recklessly imposing their creative definitions of marriage upon citizens within their jurisdiction.

They have assailed the very anchor of family, the marriage between one man and one woman. It seems obvious to me and to 70 percent of Kansans who voted for a State constitutional amendment, that when we have strong families rooted in a marriage between one man and one woman, we give the next generation the best chance for the American Dream. When we have strong families, we have strong schools, stronger communities, and a stronger Nation.

Some would say that my beliefs are simplistic and old-fashioned. But the facts are in, and the facts say there are real consequences when society does not protect marriage and the family. But don't take my word for it. Just ask former President Clinton's own domestic policy adviser, Bill Galston, who wrote, from the standpoint of economic well-being and sound psychological development, the evidence indicates that the intact two-parent family is generally preferable to the available alternatives. It follows that a prime purpose of a sound family policy is to strengthen such families by promoting their formation and retarding their breakdown whenever possible.

Dr. Galston's research indicates what many of us, what we already know through studies, that kids are better off in an intact family that begins with a marriage between one man and one woman. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, as I listen, I am struck anew by the ability of preprogrammed rhetoric to resist the facts. We have heard talk about activist judges, Federal judges. No Federal judge has been involved here. There is not a pending decision that is now in force by a single Federal judge. That doesn't stop people from invoking it, because facts are irrelevant to this kind of rhetoric.

In fact, this amendment is being described in ways that are not accurate. It is not an amendment to prevent judges, activist judges, pacifist judges, any kind of judges, from deciding. It is an amendment to prevent anybody from deciding.

In the State of Massachusetts, we have had same-sex marriage for over 2 years. None of the negative consequences that people have predicted came true.

In consequence, I believe the political community of Massachusetts is prepared to say, if two men love each other and are prepared to be committed to each other legally as well as emotionally, that is rather a good thing and we will say it's okay.

If the voters of Massachusetts, in a referendum in 2008, which we might have, were to ratify same-sex marriage, this amendment would cancel it out. It has nothing to do with activist judges. It has to do with a decision that says no State by any political process can make that decision. The legislature of California, not judges in California, voted to allow two women who love each other to be legally responsible for each other.

That, if it were to be ratified by a Governor after the next election, would be cancelled out. So this is not an amendment about activist judges. This is an amendment that says no State by whatever process, including a referendum, can make this decision.

Why? I also feel strengthened in my advocacy of a cause when people won't tell me their real arguments against it. I think this is motivated, frankly, by a dislike of those of us who are gay and lesbian on the part of those who are the main motivators.

You know, we are told don't take things personally, but I take this personally. I take it personally when people decide to take political batting practice with my life, when people decide that they would demonize, not just me, I am old, I am over it, but young people who are just starting out, who find themselves, for reasons they can't explain, attracted to someone of the same sex, and they are demonized in this House of Representatives as if they are a threat to marriage.

That is the biggest nonsensical statement of all. Yes, marriage between a man and woman who are in love is a good thing. How does allowing two men who love each other to become legally committed endanger these marriages of 37 or 38 years? Let me tell you the logical structure, or the illogical structure, of the argument on the other side.

People will remember the commercial for V8 juice years ago in which a cartoon character who was feeling poorly drank various juices to see if he or she could be energized. None of them worked. Tomato juice didn't work. Apple juice didn't work. Pineapple juice didn't work, and then someone gives him a V8. The cartoon character gets pumped up, literally, and steam comes out of his ears. He is literally now raring to go, because he had a V8.

He says to himself, wow, I could have had a V8. Note for the record, I just smacked myself in the forehead to represent what happened in the commercial. Now, that is apparently the logical structure of same-sex marriages. Apparently there were these 37-, 38-, 42-year-long marriages all over the place.

There are happily married men all over America, and they are content with their wives. They are heterosexual, and they feel this physical and emotional attraction to each other. Then they read in the paper that in the State of Massachusetts it is now possible for there to be a same-sex marriage.

How is a marriage endangered? Apparently, people happily married in Indiana, Nebraska, Kansas, and Mississippi read that we have had same-sex marriage quite successfully in Massachusetts, and they look in the mirror and they say, wow, I could have married a guy.

So, apparently, same-sex marriage is the V8 juice of America. And apparently there are people who fear that knowing that two men who love each other, want to be committed to each other, somehow will dissolve the bonds of matrimony between two heterosexuals, it is, of course, nonsense. I will do my friends the credit of acknowledging that they don't believe it. There is a political motive here. Now, there are people who are genuinely concerned that there would be negative social consequences.

I understand that. I have heard that every time we deal with discrimination, when we dealt with the Americans with Disabilities Act, with gender, with race, with ethnicity, with age. I understand their fears. We have had same-sex marriage in Massachusetts for over 2 years.

Thousands of loving men and women have been able to come together and express their commitment to each other, and no one, not even the most dedicated opponent, has been able to point to a single negative consequence.

So I understand the people who are afraid. We have disproven the fears, and what is left is only dislike of many of us. It simply is not appropriate to score political points by demonizing or seeking to minimize the lives of your fellow citizens.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers on my side. While I am going to reserve the balance of my time for closing, I want to respond and give myself as much time as I might consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts, for whom, and whose intellect, I have a deep respect. I think he knows that.

Let me just say that Americans are a good and tolerant people. The people of this country believe in equality and freedom, and we respect the rights of individuals to conduct their personal lives as they see fit.

Reasonable people can differ in their views on homosexuality or its causes, consequences, and moral significance. Personally, I think it is a good thing that American citizens who happen to be gay are accorded more tolerance and respect today than was the case 50 years ago.

But I honestly believe that the issue facing us today is not the issue of homosexuality. Most fundamentally, the issue we face today is marriage, the meaning of marriage as an institution and how best to support it. I favor the Federal Marriage Amendment because I want to support the institutution of marriage and keep it strong.

This issue is not, in my humble opinion, about homosexuality.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GINGREY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. This is a question, and I appreciate the civil spirit in which he discusses it. Would the gentleman explain to me does how the fact that two women in Massachusetts who are allowed to be legally committed to each other in any way endanger or threaten marriages between heterosexuals elsewhere?

Mr. GINGREY. Well, in response to the gentleman, again, as I said, it is not an issue of same-sex union.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. But how does it hurt?

Mr. GINGREY. And benefits that are afforded them by many States. The States certainly have the right to prescribe that in regard to issues of consanguinity and the age of consent and benefits for same-sex unions.

But they don't, in my opinion, have the right to redefine the definition of marriage.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. How does it hurt? How does the existence of a same-sex marriage in any way threaten a happy heterosexual marriage?

Mr. GINGREY. Reclaiming my time, I think that the gentlewoman from Colorado and those of us who support this constitutional amendment feel that this is all about marriage that results, or potentially can result, in the procreation of children. This is what our Constitution has implied for 223 years and, indeed, what the word of God has implied for 2,000 years.

With that, I will continue to reserve the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire how much time I have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). The gentleman from Massachusetts has 1½ minutes.

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to agree with my colleague from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) when he says that the American people are a good and tolerant people. He is absolutely right. Unfortunately, that doesn't extend in terms of the tolerance part of it to a lot of Members of this Chamber.

I mean, we have listened to this debate for nearly an hour now, and we have heard the words from the other side, and they are words of exclusion, and even hate.

□ 1130

We have heard talk about family values. Well, hate is not a family value. Discrimination is not a family value. Exclusion and denying people's rights are not family values.

In Massachusetts, my home State, same-sex marriage is legal. It is legal. Gay couples can go to the town hall, city hall, fill out the forms, pay the application fee and legally get married; 8,000 couples have done so, and everything has stayed the same in Massachusetts. Life goes on.

But what you want to do here today with this amendment is not only prevent other States from acting as Massachusetts has done, but what you are saying to those 8,000 couples is that we want to affirmatively go and take away your rights; we want to null and void your legal rights.

That is shameful. It is insulting. It is discrimination. If your State wants to ban gay marriage, that is your State's right to do so, but the people of Massachusetts have a different opinion, and if the people of Massachusetts want to respect and honor same-sex marriages, that is our business. It should not be the business of the House of Representatives or the United States Senate to go in there and to go against and to void the will of the people of Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, this is all about politics here today. The Senate has already defeated this. This is appalling that we are here today. This is about gay-bashing. It is about winning political points. Quite frankly, this is disgraceful.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise again in support of this rule and in full support of and recognition of the importance of this underlying amendment to our Constitution.

I appreciate each and every one of my colleagues who spoke during the debate on this rule. I fully recognize that many of us will have to simply, yet respectfully, as I said, disagree.

However, Mr. Speaker, I know that I stand today with the citizens of Georgia's 11th Congressional District, as well as the vast majority of Georgia and the Nation's citizens who continue to be outraged by the ability of a few judges to overturn our legal precedent and our traditional family values.

In 2004, the people of Georgia affirmed with a vote of 76 percent to 24 percent that marriage is an institution between one man and one woman, and I proudly count myself among that 76 percent.

I want to close this debate by reminding my colleagues that we have an opportunity today to stem the tide of this judicial activism and to restore the ability of the American people to establish policies that affect them and their lives through their elected Representatives.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues, please support this rule, and upon the conclusion of general debate, I ask my colleagues to affirm legal and historical precedent and defend our traditions about supporting the underlying amendment to restore the definition of marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 918, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 88) proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to marriage, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 88

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States:

''ARTICLE —

''SECTION 1. This article may be cited as the 'Marriage Protection Amendment'.

''SECTION 2. Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 918, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 45 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia.

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

Mr. Speaker, in 1996, the United States Congress passed DOMA, Defense of Marriage Act, and the idea behind that was that marriage would be recognized in this Nation as the union of one man and one woman. It was not the first time that the United States Congress had gotten involved in the definition of marriage. Indeed, Mr. LUNGREN had reminded us earlier today that the State of Utah and Arizona and I believe one other Western State, in order to join the Union, needed to define in their State constitution marriage as a union between one man and one woman in order to become States in the United States.

But unfortunately, since 1986, activist courts have eroded the intent of Congress, and so we come today on the House floor with H.J. Res. 88, which reads: ''Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State, shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman.''

The purpose of this is to say that no governmental entity, legislative, executive or judicial, shall be allowed to alter the definition of marriage from one man and one woman, and it also prevents Federal courts from construing the Constitution or a State constitution to change that definition as well.

This, indeed, is the desire of the American people at this point. A recent poll shows that 69 percent of Americans strongly agree that marriage should exist between one man and one woman. The State Constitution amendments on the States that have passed them, which now numbers 45, average by passing 71.5 percent. Forty-five States, Mr. Speaker, have enacted laws about this.

Why is this necessary, then, to come back to the floor if the States are handling it? The fact is that there are great and deliberate challenges to DOMA in the United States Constitution. We can go back to 1965. The Supreme Court in Griswold v. Connecticut discovered a constitutional right to contraceptive noted in marital privacy, and the Court in Roe v. Wade in 1973 decided that the right to reproductive privacy was applied to abortion, wholly outside the context of a marriage.

In 1996, the Court in Bowers v. Hardwick refused to create a right of sexual privacy for same-sex couples, but then, in 2003, the Court reversed itself in the Lawrence v. Texas case. In the Lawrence case, the Court claimed not to have gone so far as to establish a right to same-sex marriage, but then the State of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court prominently used the Lawrence decision just a few months later to do exactly that.

That is why we are here today, Mr. Speaker. This is not, as we have been charged, political pandering. This is not a frivolous exercise. Indeed, I certainly think this Congress, under the leadership of the Speaker and under the leadership of the President of the United States, has worked hard to address the issues of the day. We have worked hard in the war on terrorism.

We have worked hard in the situation in the Middle East. Indeed, as the President attended the G–8, the number one topic right now is, of course, Lebanon and Israel.

We have worked hard on balancing the budget. This House recently passed the line-item veto. This House has passed earmark reform. The Appropriations Committee, which has passed 10 out of its 11 appropriations bills, has reduced spending $4 billion by cutting out 95 different programs. We are engaged in addressing the fuel situation. We have passed tax reform which has created 5.3 million jobs since 2003.

We are very involved in the issues of today, and I will say to you that marriage is certainly one of the top-tier issues that it is the right and the obligation of the United States Congress to address, and again, not a battle that we have chosen to have but one that has been thrown back to us by the courts.

That is why we are here today, and we will have this debate, and I look forward to hearing from my friend from New York.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of marriage, in support of families, and in support of national unity. I rise against this proposed constitutional amendment, against the drumbeat of election-year political demagoguery.

This amendment does not belong in our Constitution. It is unworthy of our great Nation. The Senate could not even muster a simple majority to consider it, much less the requisite two-thirds to adopt it.

We have amended the Constitution only 27 times in our history, the first 10 of them, the Bill of Rights, in 1791. Constitutional amendments have always been used to enhance and expand the rights of citizens, not to restrict them.

The Bill of Rights, which was added in 1791, protected freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, the right to be secure in our homes. Ten amendments protecting individual rights and liberties. We amended the Constitution to permanently wipe away the stain of slavery, to expand the right to vote, to expand the rights of citizenship and to allow for the direct election of senators.

Now we are being asked to amend the Constitution again, to single out a single group and to say to them for all time, you cannot even attempt to win the right to marry.

This amendment was introduced last month. We have never held hearings on it. The Judiciary Committee has never considered it. Never. Don't let anyone tell you that the Judiciary Committee considered it in 2003. We did not. That was a different amendment we considered.

But what is the Constitution between friends when there is an election coming up? From what precisely would this amendment protect marriage? From divorce? From adultery? No. Evidently, the threat to marriage is the fact that there are millions of people in this country who very much believe in marriage, who very much want to marry but who are not permitted to marry.

□ 1145

This amendment, contrary to what we have heard, doesn't block activist courts from allowing people of the same sex to marry. It would also prevent their fellow citizens from deciding democratically to permit them to do so, whether through the legislative process or even through a referendum of the people.

And why is it requisite on Congress to tell any State that the people of that State may not make up their minds for themselves on this question? Why is it necessary for the Federal Government to amend our Constitution to say to Massachusetts, which is going to hold a referendum on this subject in 2008, you may not do so because we have decided this for you?

Mr. Speaker, I have been searching in vain for some indication of what might happen to my marriage, or to the marriage of anyone in this room, if loving couples, including couples with custody of children, are permitted to enjoy the blessings of matrimony.

If there is a Member of this House who believes that his or her own marriage would be destroyed by someone else's same-sex marriage somewhere in America, I would welcome an explanation of what he or she thinks would happen to his or her marriage and why.

Are there any takers? Anyone here who wants to get up and say why they believe their marriage would be threatened if two other people are permitted to marry?

I didn't think so.

The overheated rhetoric we have been hearing is reminiscent of the bellicose fear-mongering that followed the Supreme Court's decision almost 40 years ago in Loving v. Virginia which struck down State prohibitions against interracial marriage. The Supreme Court had overstepped its authority, we were told. The Supreme Court had overridden the democratic will of the majority, the Supreme Court had signed a death warrant for all that is good and pure in this Nation. Fortunately, we survived as a Nation and we are better for that Supreme Court decision.

I believe firmly that in the not-too-distant future people will look back on these debates with the incredulity with which we now view the segregationist debates of years past. I think the public opinion polls are indicative: Opposition to gay marriage is a direct function of age. The older people are, the more set in the ways of the old discriminatory practices of this country they are, the more they oppose gay marriage. If you take a poll of people under 35 years old, 70 to 75 percent are in favor of allowing gay marriage. That is the trend for the future because demographics is destiny.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment actually does more than it purports to do. It would not only preempt any State law allowing people of the same gender to marry, even if that law was approved by the legislature or by referendum, it would preclude any State from extending medical visitation privileges or inheritance rights, for example, to same-sex couples. That is what ''the incidents thereof'' in the amendment means.

Proponents of this amendment have already tried to use a similar prohibition against same-sex marriage to attack in court domestic-partner benefits. So when they tell you this is only about marriage, don't believe it. No court has required that a marriage in one State be recognized in another, so don't believe anyone who tells you that this amendment is meant to protect your own State laws.

The Defense of Marriage Act which passed this Congress and which the President signed in 1996 says no State can impose its marriage laws on another.

There are many loving families, Mr. Speaker, who deserve the benefits and protections of the law. They don't live just in New York or San Francisco or Boston, they live in every one of the 435 congressional districts of this great country. They are not from outer space, they are not a public menace, and they do not threaten anyone. They are our neighbors, our coworkers, our friends, our siblings, our parents, and our children. They deserve to be treated fairly. They deserve the same rights as any other family.

I regret that this House is being so demeaned by this debate. It saddens me that this great institution would sink to these depths to have what we have already heard on this floor and to what we will hear that amounts to pure bigotry against a minority population, even on the eve of an election.

We know this amendment is not going anywhere. We know this is merely a political exercise. Shame on this House for playing politics with bigotry.

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I would just point out to my good friend from New York that 16 States have recently passed marriage protection amendments, and on an average they have passed by 71.5 percent.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the primary author of H.J. Res. 88, the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Speaker HASTERT and Mr. Leader BOEHNER for bringing this bill to the floor. Letters and e-mails and phone calls continue to pour into my office urging me to continue in this effort. We know that polls show that the overwhelming majority of the American people support traditional marriage, marriage between a man and a woman.

The people have a right to know whether their elected Representatives agree with them about protecting traditional marriage.

I cannot think of a better good that this body may pursue than to promote and defend the idea that every child deserves both a father and a mother. Studies demonstrate the utmost importance of the presence of a child's biological parents in a child's happiness, health and future achievements. If we chip away at the institution which binds these parents and the family together, the institution of marriage, you begin to chip away at the future success of that child.

I would not want to negate the heroic job that many single parents do every day in providing the necessary support to a child's happiness. But today we are discussing what social policy is best for our children, and I am convinced that the best is found in promoting and defending traditional marriage.

Are there other important issues? Of course there are, but preserving the institution of marriage, which, as the Supreme Court said many years ago, is ''the foundation of the family and of society, without which there would be neither civilization nor progress,'' certainly warrants a few hours of our time. And even if there are other issues we need to address, as a former Member, one of my favorites, J.C. Watts said, ''Members of Congress are capable of walking and chewing gum at the same time.''

And where are those who say we are wasting time when we were renaming post offices and Federal buildings earlier this year? Mr. Speaker, if we have enough time to rename post offices and Federal buildings, surely we can spend one afternoon debating whether or not the traditional definition of marriage is worth preserving.

Others have asked why we need this amendment given that courts in New York, Georgia, and Nebraska have recently turned back challenges to traditional marriage. I just would like to say these decisions simply do not settle the issues. Cases in New Jersey and Washington, to name only two of many, remain pending.

Additionally, the Massachusetts Supreme Court's Goodridge decision legalizing same-sex marriage in that State continues to stand. Just last week, legislators in Massachusetts put off a measure to give the people the opportunity to decide this issue for themselves. While the Goodridge case remains on the books, court dockets all over the country will continue to be ensnarled with same-sex marriage litigation as opponents of traditional marriage continue to fight to expand their agenda to the rest of the country.

While recent court victories are not unimportant, the ultimate court test, the test in the United States Supreme Court, is still on the horizon. And legal experts agree at least four and probably five of the members of that court will act to overturn traditional marriage across America. That is why most legal experts expect DOMA to fall once a challenge finally reaches the high Court, which is why it would be the very height of foolishness to rely on the Supreme Court to protect marriage. Sadly, that august tribunal is part of the problem. Justice Scalia has already warned us that the Court's 2003 Lawrence decision was only the beginning of a road at the end of which is a radical redefinition of marriage at the hands of the Court.

Does anyone else see the irony in the opponents of this bill calling on us to wait until the Supreme Court rules before deciding this issue? Many of those who protested the loudest that DOMA was unconstitutional when it was enacted in 1996 are today the ones who say we ought to presume DOMA is constitutional until the high Court tells us otherwise.

The American people want us to settle this issue now. They don't want us to wait to see how much havoc the courts will wreak on the definition of marriage before we act to protect it.

Our marriage laws represent centuries of cumulative wisdom regarding the best way to address public concerns about property, inheritance, legal liability and raising children. The last matter is especially important because we now know beyond any reasonable doubt that children thrive best when they are raised in a traditional family. And statistically speaking, the further we go from this ideal, the more we can expect to see increases in measures as a whole host of social problems.

Again, this is not to say that children raised in nontraditional families will necessarily fall prey to these problems, but public policy is based on cumulative, not individual experience. Facts, as it has been said, are stubborn things. And one sad but stubborn fact is that the statistical dice are loaded against children who are raised without a father and a mother.

Some oppose the Marriage Protection Amendment on the grounds that the institution of marriage is already in trouble. Why be concerned, they say, about same-sex marriage when the divorce rate among couples in traditional marriages is so high? But can't you see this is a non sequitur? It is like saying to a doctor, The patient already has pneumonia, so why are you taking precautions to prevent him from getting a staph infection? Yes, traditional marriage has its problems, we all know that, and the high divorce rate is a national scandal. But far from undermining my point, this reinforces it. We are dismayed by the breakup of families because we know broken families lead to more and more children being deprived of the tremendous benefit of having both their mom and dad around to raise them.

Other opponents of this amendment argue that the existence of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts has not caused the earth to stop spinning on its axis, so they ask what is all this fuss about. After only 2 years of experience, it is absurd to suggest that we can even begin to guess how the redefinition of marriage in that State will ramify in the future. And the fact that same-sex marriages in Massachusetts do not directly affect my marriage or your marriage means nothing in regard to the public policy debate. The breakup of the family next door does not directly affect your marriage or my marriage either, but we all recognize that every family that comes apart is a tragedy, and that is why our laws have always sought to encourage, not undermine, traditional families.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN).

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, you are the Republican Party in America and what do you do? You have had control of the House of Representatives, you control the Supreme Court, you control the United States Senate, you control the White House. What are you going to do?

Seven million people in America are unemployed.

There are 46 million Americans that don't have health insurance.

The minimum wage hasn't been increased in nearly a decade. The gap between people who are wealthy and people who are poor is getting wider and wider.

We have a war in Iraq that has killed 2,500 Americans, 20,000 Americans have been seriously injured, and a policy going in the wrong direction.

You have a failed prescription drug plan, written by the prescription drug industry behind closed doors, that is confusing seniors. It is going to cost taxpayers $700 billion.

Gasoline is $3 a gallon at the pump.

□ 1200

Global warming is threatening our environment and our health. What are you going to do? Let's have a debate about gay marriage again on the floor of the House.

We are not going to debate an exit strategy in Iraq. We don't have a plan to lower the cost of gasoline. We don't have a plan to provide health care or to give American seniors the ability to buy prescription drugs at a low cost in bulk. Oh, no. Oh no, this is Tuesday in Washington in the House of Representatives, and we are going to debate gay marriage.

This debate is meant to do nothing more than get the American people to look at other issues, ignore gas prices, ignore the unemployment rate. Let's talk about gay marriage.

I am proud to be from Massachusetts and represent 8,000 couples who have been married. And let me tell you about one of the couples in my district, Bonnie Winokar and her partner Mary McCarthy. They have been together for 19 years. But for 17 of those years, Bonnie was unable to provide Mary with the health care benefits that she

was afforded as a high school math teacher. Two years ago they got married and now this happy couple has health insurance. They have coverage. They have family visitation and inheritance rights that every other married couple in America has.

I ask my colleagues, how do Bonnie and Mary threaten other marriages? I don't feel threatened by the 8,000 couples in Massachusetts who have been married. As a matter of fact, I want to tell you something. People in Massachusetts overwhelmingly now realize that approving gay marriage has not in any way negatively impacted heterosexual couples. That is why, overwhelmingly, people in Massachusetts support the SJC decision.

But we ought to keep clear and keep in mind that this debate today is not really about gay marriage. It is about the failure of this administration and this Congress to do the right thing by the American people.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the former attorney general of California, the distinguished DAN LUNGREN.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, where to begin? We have heard the argument that somehow we shouldn't bring constitutional amendments to the floor; we shouldn't amend the Constitution.

It is a very interesting argument when you realize there are two ways to amend the Constitution, one is the formal process that is contained in the Constitution itself, which we are embarking upon today, and the other one is by activist judges.

People don't like to hear that. They seem to say judges have the right to amend the Constitution, to give new meaning to the words of the Constitution, to actually give the opposite meaning to the words of the Constitution and we have to accept that forever, because if we do anything opposed to that, we are somehow changing the Constitution, even though we are following the exact requirements of the Constitution itself.

The second thing that is said is wait a second, no court has declared marriage to be unconstitutional in the traditional sense, so we should wait until that happens. In other words, if we take an anticipatory action, somehow we are unconstitutional.

How have we changed the terms of the debate when we are talking about a traditional definition of marriage that has stood the test of time for thousands of years, has been understood by every single one of our Founding Fathers at the time of the formation of this country, that somehow we are the ones that are upsetting the apple cart; when, in fact, it is those who wish to change this traditional definition in a radical way?

They say, well, the Federal Government should not be involved in it. And yet we pointed out historically the Federal Government has been involved in defining marriage, refusing to allow at least the State of Utah to become a State until they accepted that definition of marriage.

What we are talking about is changing the fundamental vision of marriage that is in our civil structure, a preferential treatment that is allowed under our laws for marriage, understood traditionally. And they say, well, we passed DOMA so you don't have to worry. Yet, many who are saying that argued on the floor of the House that DOMA was unconstitutional. Professor Lawrence Tribe has said it is unconstitutional. Many of the organizations who are against this particular amendment have argued in court that it is unconstitutional and believe it is only inevitable until they overturn it by way of their particular lawsuits brought against it.

So the question here is really, do you believe there is reason to maintain the traditional definition of marriage, allowing it to be the essential unit of our society, not that there aren't other units of society, but the essential unit of our society that has withstood the test of time? That is the simple question before us.

We never asked for this debate. This debate began with, yes, activist judges who said, wait a second, times have changed and, therefore, the traditional notion of marriage is out the window.

Why? Who said so? Because of what?

This is not a question of discrimination as some have argued on the other side, unless they are saying we are discriminating against bigamy and polygamy, because the United States has spoken, as I said before, in saying the traditional definition of marriage is enshrined in our institutions and in our law.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge my colleagues to oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment. The Republican leadership clearly doesn't get it. Our country is grappling with skyrocketing gas prices, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the constant threat of terrorism, concerns about pension security, and the rising cost of health care insurance.

But instead of addressing these priorities, what does the Republican leadership decide we need to focus on? Gay marriage, of course. As if passing the Federal Marriage Amendment would magically make all of our country's biggest challenges go away.

This resolution is not only a waste of time; it is completely unnecessary. The Senate has already rejected this amendment, so we know that even if the House passes this, the bill is not going anywhere.

Furthermore, 45 States already ban same-sex marriage, either by statute or by their State constitution.

Even more important, passage of this amendment would mark the first time that our Constitution has been amended to take rights away from people. Amending our Constitution to force States to discriminate against a targeted group of Americans would tarnish our history of protecting everybody's equal rights under the law.

I therefore strongly urge all of my colleagues to vote against the Federal Marriage Amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE).

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, the proposed constitutional amendment before us today illustrates exactly why those who wrote the Constitution of the United States went to such extraordinary lengths to ensure that it was a long and arduous task to amend it.

The procedure to pass a constitutional amendment was designed specifically to compel the Nation and its leaders to carefully consider the significant and profound implications such a change could bring. This issue simply fails to meet the threshold of what the Framers called a ''great and extraordinary occasion.'' But of even greater significance is the issue of individual rights. This proposed amendment would be the first time we would amend that document to restrict human freedoms, rather than to protect and expand them.

Let's be honest. This bill has been brought to the House floor by the leadership solely because of election-year politics. The very process by which this bill comes up is an affront to this institution. Like previous attempts, it was not considered by any committee of the House, it was not brought to the floor by the chairman of that committee, rather it was brought by the leadership, who decided to take it upon themselves to do the work of the committees and their chairmen.

Moreover, this same legislation was considered in the Senate, where it didn't even receive a majority vote, much less the required two-thirds for a constitutional amendment. Why then are we rushing to judgment here today? What is the compelling reason to consider this now?

Sixteen States have passed constitutional amendments that would define marriage in their own States as being between a man and a woman. Others, including my own State, are considering such amendments this year. While I may disagree with the voters in my State or any State in adopting such an amendment to their constitution, that is their prerogative, and State constitutions are where they should be considered.

For better than 200 years, family law has been exclusively the domain of the States. That is where it should remain. Vice President CHENEY said exactly this, and I agree with him. The chief crafter of the Defense of Marriage Act of 1996, former Representative Bob

Barr, said as much, and I agree with him. Marriage and divorce, inheritance and adoption, child custody, these are matters correctly left to the States. It does not belong in the Constitution of the United States.

But that is the genius of our Federal system, to allow States to find solutions to issues such as family law which work uniquely for them. The States can pass their own laws, and many have. We should not be in the business of passing a constitutional amendment to make this point. And we certainly should not be tampering with the Constitution to address an ongoing societal dialogue on, admittedly, a very difficult subject.

Amending the Constitution is, thankfully, a difficult task. That cumbersome process has saved us from making ill-advised changes during these past 215 years. It will save us now from this ill-advised action.

We have not used the amending process to limit the rights of citizens. From the first amendment to the 14th, the original Framers and the Congress that followed have sought to expand, to protect the rights of citizens. This would be a unique amendment in that it takes away rights from one group while specifically conferring them upon another. Try to find another provision in the Constitution that does this. You will look in vain.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress and those after should be about protecting and expanding freedoms. This proposed amendment to our Constitution is about discrimination. It is about fear. It is unnecessary. It is unwarranted, and it should be soundly defeated.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT).

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.J. Res. 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

The debate before us today is about ensuring that the will of the people of the United States is protected.

My home State of South Carolina is one of 45 States that has already enacted laws defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Our message is clear: marriage matters, and it should be limited to that of a man and a woman.

So I stand here today wondering why we are faced with the fact that a handful of judges have taken it upon themselves to hand down rulings that redefine marriage for moms and dads and most importantly children across this Nation.

Mr. Speaker, some in this country, elected by no one, believe they have the right to supersede the wishes of my constituents and the constituents of other Members here today.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in supporting the Marriage Protection Amendment ensuring constituents' voices are heard.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Constitution Subcommittee, Mr. NADLER, for his fine work in this area. He hasn't had all that much to do because the bill never came to the Constitution Committee. We never had hearings. We never had a markup. We didn't even have supporters of this amendment yesterday at the Rules Committee which set the rules that allowed it to come to the floor today.

And so I am happy to join in opposition with a number of friends that I would like to indicate. First, the NAACP, which is in convention here in Washington this week, is strongly opposed to this amendment. So is the AFL–CIO and the American Civil Liberties Union, the Jewish Committee, the Human Rights Campaign, the National Council of La Raza, the National Urban League, Planned Parenthood, and countless religious organizations. They are all telling us to leave the Constitution alone.

The other consideration that I would bring to the Members' attention is the far-reaching scope of this amendment that has never been heard in the Judiciary Committee. Not only would it ban same-sex marriages, but it would also deprive same-sex couples and their families of fundamental protections such as hospital visitation, inheritance rights, and health care benefits.

Ladies and gentlemen, this amendment is divisive. It is unnecessary. It is constitutionally extreme. And I must point out that the amendment has already been debated in the other body and did not prevail. What we are doing, as has been widely recognized, is a political act. It is getting near election time. Let's whip up the forces of conservatism. Let's deal with this subject to energize the political base 4 months before the election.

□ 1215

Ladies and gentlemen, please, the amendment is unnecessary because our Constitution has been amended only 27 times in 219 years and to preserve our right to free speech was one of the objectives, to protect the right to assemble was another objective of a constitutional amendment, the right to vote was subject to constitutional amendment. The right to be free of discrimination was subject to constitutional amendment. They all ensured the integrity and continuity of our government.

So I urge a ''no'' vote on the Musgrave same-sex marriage amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that, in fact, under H.J. Res. 88, State legislatures can allow same-sex benefits in the unions.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the marriage amendment and offer heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) for her principled, compassionate, and courageous leadership on this issue from her very first term in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, in the wake of ominous decisions by activist courts across the land, I come to the well today to defend that institution that forms the backbone of our society: traditional marriage. Like millions of Americans, I believe that marriage matters, that it was ordained by God, instituted among men, that it is the glue of the American family and the safest harbor to raise children.

I believe first, though, marriage should be protected, because it wasn't our idea. Several millennia ago the words were written that a man should leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh. It was not our idea; it was God's idea. And I say that unashamedly on the floor where the words ''In God We Trust'' appear above your chair, Mr. Speaker.

And let me say emphatically that this debate today is not about discrimination. I believe that if someone chooses another life-style than I have chosen, that that is their right in a free society. But tolerance does not require that we permit our courts to redefine an institution upon which our society depends. Marriage matters, according to the researchers. Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin found that throughout history, societal collapse was always brought about following an advent of the deterioration of marriage and family.

And marriage matters to kids. As my Hoosier colleague and friend Vice President Dan Quayle first accurately observed, Mr. Speaker, marriage is the safest harbor to raise children. Sociologists tell us that children raised by married parents experience lower rates of premarital childbearing, illicit drug use, arrest, health, emotional and behavioral problems, school dropout rate, and poverty.

And marriage even matters to adults. A recent 5-year study in 1998 found that continuously married husbands and wives experience significantly better emotional health and less depression than people of other marital status.

Let us say ''yes'' very humbly today to the marriage as traditionally defined. Let us say ''no'' to activist courts bent on redefining it.

Marriage matters, Mr. Speaker. It was ordained by God, instituted in the law. It is the glue of the American family and the safest harbor to raise children. Let us put in that most sacred of documents an affirmation of that institution upon which our society demands.

I urge my colleagues to embrace H.J. Res. 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Two years ago this May, people in Massachusetts, my home State, woke up thinking and talking about same-sex marriage like everyone else. You could not avoid it. It was on the cover of every newspaper. It was a national issue.

Now, since then, 9,000 gay and lesbian couples have been married in Massachusetts. And you know what the news flash is? The news flash is that there is not a news flash. The sky has not fallen. The tsunamis have not come. Everyone is going through their daily lives.

Mr. Speaker, the average American family does not wake up every morning worrying about same-sex marriage. Instead, they are worried about the price of gas that they have to put in their vehicle to take their kids to school. They worry about whether their kids are getting a decent education. They worry about health care. They worry about mortgage rates and whether they will ever be able to retire.

And if they are worried about any marriage, I would suggest it is their own. There are plenty of threats to marriage out there today. We are all aware of them. Trying to find time to spend with their families, the pressures of making ends meet, all the challenges that we all know exist. But what is not a threat is gay marriage.

In Massachusetts gay couples are not masterminding acts of terrorism. They are not cutting Medicaid. They are not putting a hole in the Medicare prescription drug program. They are not running up the Federal deficit. They are doing what everyone else does. They are getting through life.

Others have alluded to the constitutional issues. There are States everywhere, Mr. Speaker, that are addressing this through the constitutional means available to them as States, and that is fine. A recent ruling in Massachusetts from the Supreme Judicial Court that entered the famous decision that has provoked some controversy said that if the people of Massachusetts want to overrule the decision of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, they can via their own State constitutional mechanism. Let them do it if they want to. As others have said, this is an area that has been reserved continually through our jurisprudence to our States.

But, no, it is an election year. We know it is an election year and we know you have to do it. You have got to energize the base. But the American people are not stupid. They see through this. They know what is going to happen.

I remember when the President came to office pledging that he would be a uniter, not a divider. And what we are doing here today is divisive and dividing Americans. Let us experience a sense of tolerance.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS).

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, marriage has been under attack for years in America. Regardless of where we look, we have seen a gradual weakening of the institution that historically we have relied on to nurture America's kids.

And while marriage has taken a beating from divorce and other factors, the statistics still show that the best home for kids is still with a mom and dad who are married and love each other. That is the ideal we are talking about here: the best home for kids. By protecting marriage, this amendment promotes such an environment for our kids.

Statistics show children living with their mom and dad are safer, that they are less likely to be abused or neglected, that they have fewer health problems, that they engage in fewer risky behaviors than their peers, that they are more likely to do well in school, that they are better off economically, that they display increased ability to adapt to changing circumstances. Study after study shows us this, Mr. Speaker.

But most Americans do not need a scientific study to tell them that marriage is important for our children and our families. When given the chance to have their voices heard on this issue, they have overwhelmingly come down on the side of protecting marriage. Twenty States have now passed voter referendums to amend their constitution to protect marriage. Six more will have it on the ballot this November. Six more next year. There is a pattern here. Every time the people are actually given a chance to vote on this, they choose to protect marriage overwhelmingly. In more than half of the 20 States, they have amended their constitution with over 70 percent of the vote or more.

These numbers should tell us something, Mr. Speaker. They should tell us that people understand intuitively what studies show us empirically: Marriage is important, it is the foundation of the family and it is the safest harbor to raise children.

This amendment protects marriage from the whims of activist courts that would further undermine this institution by radically redefining its definition. It would see to it that the people have a say on an issue of fundamental importance to our Nation.

It is the right policy, Mr. Speaker, and I urge all my colleagues to support the Marriage Protection Amendment today.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this issue.

I have heard my friends on the other side talk about marriage being under attack. Well, I think it probably is in many sectors. Marriages are under strain today in terms of economics. There are social cross-currents. We see failed marriages. But it is not under attack by our gay and lesbian citizens.

The gay and lesbian citizens I know in my community are dealing with the everyday stresses of their lives, which are actually more difficult than most Americans. They are struggling against discrimination in the workplace. They are struggling against discrimination and in some cases violence directed towards gay and lesbian citizens. And every day gay and lesbian couples in long-term committed relationships, sometimes involving children, have to struggle with the fact that they are not afforded the protections and the resources to be able to deal with the everyday challenges like health care emergencies. That is what they are dealing with. They are not assaulting my marriage or anybody else's. They are trying to deal with a difficult hand that has been dealt to them.

The good news is that we are seeing the changes that are going to make a difference in the long run. The good news is that younger Americans wonder what bizarre episode we are involved with here. They are not peddling discrimination and hate. They have a much more positive and healthy attitude towards their neighbors, their friends, their relations, who happen to be gay and lesbian. The good news is that the States are trying to figure out ways to handle it.

The bad news is that Congress is not part of the solution but is instead pandering politically in something that has already been killed in the other Chamber, that has no chance of passage; going through a ritual that is actually setting us back.

I am confident that in the long run truth and justice is going to prevail. We are not going to be having any assaults on any heterosexual marriages, but we will be dealing with how we are going to provide the necessary protections for our gay and lesbian citizens. That day, sadly, is not today.

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. NADLER for yielding the time.

At the beginning of every session of Congress, I raise my right hand and state the following oath: ''I, Tammy Baldwin, do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.''

□ 1230

I have felt deep pride in our country and our democracy and particularly in the Constitution itself every time I have taken that oath. But if we were to pass this amendment, it would put a stain on our founding document.

In our democracy since its founding, a basic premise is that in a government by, for and of the people, the people must have the ability to petition their government for the redress of grievances. Americans who wanted women to have the right to vote petitioned their government. Americans who wanted an end to slavery petitioned their government. Americans who wanted an end to child labor petitioned their government. Americans who wanted to end segregation policies petitioned their government. Americans who wanted to protect our environment petitioned their government.

Our constitutional system, the checks and balances between the three coequal branches of government, was created to ensure protection of minority rights, and throughout history many groups of individuals have sought such protection from their government. Today, Americans who want the protection of marriage laws for their same-sex partnerships are in the process of petitioning their government.

The Constitution is for expanding rights, opportunities and aspirations. I want to see the day when I can protect my family, my life partner of 10 years, through the same laws and with the same obligations, responsibilities and rights as can straight Americans. These are my aspirations, both as an American and as a Member of Congress, to see the Constitution that I have sworn to support and protect illuminating a path to justice and equality for more and more Americans.

The amendment we are debating today would do just the opposite. Why would we amend the U.S. Constitution to say that one group of Americans, gay and lesbian Americans, can no longer petition their government for redress of grievances? A healthy and a vibrant debate on same-sex marriage is occurring throughout this Nation at this very time in break rooms, in dining rooms, in church basements. Don't cut it off. It is what democracy is all about.

One State in our Union allows same-sex marriages, several others have passed civil union protections for same-sex couples, and others still are silent on the issue or have passed laws or State constitutional amendments prohibiting same-sex marriage. This is what happens in a democracy when people petition their government for change.

But we also know that this really isn't about the substance. It is about politics. Why else would we be debating and voting on a measure that the Senate has already effectively killed?

You will get your rollcall vote, but shame on you for playing politics with people's families and their lives.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES).

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly rise in support of House Joint Resolution 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Today, Mr. Speaker, 45 out of 50 States have enacted laws defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman. That is 90 percent of the States, and these States contain 88 percent of the population.

In August 2004, the people of my home State of Missouri overwhelmingly voted by a majority of 71 to 29 percent to approve a State constitutional amendment protecting the traditional definition of marriage. Unfortunately, this sacred institution and the will of the people are under direct assault by an out-of-control judiciary branch. Radical judges on the supreme court of Massachusetts have already imposed same-sex marriage in that Commonwealth against the wishes of a majority of citizens, and I fear the activist State and Federal judges will soon impose same-sex marriage upon other jurisdictions in our Nation.

What that means is the people in my home State of Missouri may have legal recognition of same-sex marriage forced upon them, even though 71 percent of Missourians voted to adopt an amendment preventing such a practice.

Mr. Speaker, it is becoming increasingly apparent that our only recourse is to amend the Constitution of the United States. This is not a decision I take lightly, but we must act to defend the foundation of our society. Without such an amendment, people in Missouri, and many other States, will be disenfranchised by the courts.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Senate has dealt with this, and, no, this isn't a political issue. The reason that the Senate has dealt with this is exactly why the House needs to stand up and send a positive message to the American people about what is the best married environment to raise our children, and that is an environment that is a marriage between a man and a woman.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress as representatives of the American people has a duty to protect marriage from attack by the courts. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, first, let's be very clear: this is not an attempt to restrain judges.

There have been two sources of opposition to same-sex marriage. A large number of people who bear those of us who are gay and lesbian no ill will have been opposed to it because they have heard that it would lead to social disruption. That is a common theme when we deal with issues involving particular groups in our society against whom there has been discrimination.

I invite people to go back and read the debates over the Americans with Disabilities Act to read what people like Pat Robertson said in opposition to it. I remember this debate 30 years ago in Massachusetts when we were talking about the Equal Rights Amendment. And so, yes, I understand that there are people who are opposed to same-sex marriage who do not in any way feel themselves prejudiced against gay men and lesbians, but who worry about the social consequences.

I think here we can point to the facts. We had full civil unions in Vermont in 2000. We have had same-sex marriage in Massachusetts for over 2 years. In no case is there the slightest evidence of social disruption. Let me say, though, that is one wing of the opposition.

There is another wing in the opposition, the people who are motivated by this, who really, frankly, dislike the fact that we exist; and disliking the fact that we exist individually, they are particularly distraught at the notion that we will associate with each other in various ways.

I want to address now the people who are worried about the social consequences, because I invite people to look at the evidence. There were no negatives.

But now let me go back to the point about the judges, because that is relevant to Massachusetts, and the points are linked. Because in Massachusetts what we have seen is that thousands of people have had their lives enriched by being able to love each other in a legally connected way, and it has been a good thing for them, and it has had zero negative consequences. I believe the political community in Massachusetts, through the elected legislature, maybe through a referendum, although I hope it doesn't come to that, will support this.

Be very clear: this amendment says that even if the people of Massachusetts, after 4 years of same-sex marriage being in existence, vote to ratify it by a majority, their vote does not count. This amendment cancels out a referendum.

In California, where the legislature voted for it, if a Governor should be elected in November who would sign that bill, this amendment says, no, legislature; no, Governor. We the Federal Government will decide. So it is not about restraining activist judges. It is about overruling any decision.

So then the question is, Why do it? Usually our view would be that if people are going to benefit from something, enjoy it, we would let that happen, in the absence of harm.

Now, clearly there is value to same-sex marriage. There are men and women, millions of us, who, for reasons we don't understand, nobody really does, in my judgment, feel an attraction to people of the same sex. What many of them have said is, you know what, we would like to have our love put into a legally connected context.

We want to be legally bound to each other, as we are emotionally and morally.

Who is that hurting? Well, we are told that it hurts marriage. And here is where the illogic comes in. People get up and say we have to be against letting two women marry because it is very important that men and women marry.

There is no connection. Nothing here threatens heterosexual marriage. It is just the most illogical argument I have ever heard. If two men are attracted to each other and want to live together legally, how does that endanger heterosexual marriage?

So the argument that we must ban same-sex marriage to protect heterosexual marriage literally makes no sense whatsoever. No one has shown me what the connection is. As a matter of fact, of course, people will have an example of people of the same sex living together, and if that somehow destabilizes heterosexual marriage, then it is going to happen.

If the gentleman wants me to yield, I would be glad to yield.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, what I would like to ask is this: Does the gentleman see any problem with society allowing preferential status in some ways to the traditional marriage between a man and a woman? Because that, to me, is what it really comes down to.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I would say to the gentleman this: no, I think we give preferential status to people who are married over people who aren't. What I don't see, what no one has argued, is how does allowing two men have that status interfere with the status. I assume you give a preferential status because you want to give people an incentive to marry. Okay, let's do that. Let's give people an incentive to marry.

But if you are a heterosexual strongly attracted to someone of the opposite sex and really not at all attracted to the idea of someone of your same sex, how does the existence of that undermine this?

Yes, I think we should give a preference to heterosexual marriage. We should incentivize it. How does the existence of same-sex marriage discourage or retard heterosexual marriage? Would anyone want to answer that for me?

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. AKIN).

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, the debate before us today, as has been highlighted by people from both sides of the aisle, is about a definition of marriage. I think that the point that in the subtlest way has to be made clear, it is something that most Americans understand logically, and that is marriage is not about love; it is about a love that can bear children. There is a difference.

I love my parents. I love my family. I have friends that I love. But I love my wife and we are married. Marriage is a love that bears children and replenishes society along those lines.

I have been married personally for 31 years. We have six children and even a grandson. The children are doing well. One is a first lieutenant that just came back from Fallujah. The other two sons are over at the Naval Academy. I have two daughters that have not gone off to school yet.

All of those children, growing up with a mother and a father, have understood the first primitive concepts of government. They have understood what it is like to live under authority. They understand what it is like to work hard. They have learned to walk and to talk and to get along with each other and all of those things.

We also know that historically the people that are filling our prisons, the people who socially get in trouble a lot are statistically people who have not had the blessings of a loving mother and father and a stable home. It doesn't mean that people can't get in trouble when they come from that background, but statistically it is a lot easier for a child to grow up with the benefit of a loving home with a mother and a father.

So from a practical point of view, to preserve our civilization and society, it is important for us to preserve marriage. It is not just love; it is a love that produces children.

We ask ourselves, well, is this such a big debate? Really it shouldn't be. We have 45 States that have passed legislation saying a marriage is between a man and a woman. Also anybody who knows something about the history of the human race knows that there is no civilization which has condoned homosexual marriage widely and openly that has long survived.

It is for the practical reason that marriage is about bringing the next generation along, and it works best with one dad and one mom. That is what a great majority of Americans believe.

So it is sad that we have to basically tell our courts, because of their activist nature, the beliefs of such a great block of Americans.

I will conclude my comments by doing something that I don't know that I have done on the floor before, and that is to call attention to my colleague, the gentlewoman from Colorado, MARILYN MUSGRAVE, who has had the courage to do what seems so obvious, so obvious to at least 45 States' worth of Americans, to bring this amendment to the floor.

For her efforts to defend plain old traditional marriage, she has had millions of dollars thrown against her, and even a television ad that I have seen of some fat pink-dressed lady that is stealing jewelry off a corpse. She has had to put up with that.

I say to you, Congresswoman MUSGRAVE, we are proud of you, and we thank you for standing up for something that is so foundational to our society.

□ 1245

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished minority leader of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. I thank Mr. NADLER for yielding and for his great leadership in defending the Constitution of the United States which is, of course, our oath of office.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Mr. CONYERS, the gentleman from Michigan, for his leadership on this important issue, and to say to Congresswoman BALDWIN and to Congressman FRANK what an honor it is to serve with you in the Congress. It is a privilege to call you colleague.

Mr. Speaker, the crisis in the Middle East reminds us that it is our responsibility as a Congress to address the urgent priorities of the American people. Yet today it is painfully obvious that instead of tackling the challenges facing our Nation and our world, Republicans want to persist in their agenda to distract and to divide.

That is why the American people are demanding a new direction. That is why they say in great numbers that our country is going in the wrong direction. The challenges that our country face are too great for the Republican politics as usual. The constitutional amendment that we are debating today has been brought to this floor with full knowledge that it has no prospect for success either now or in the near future, the foreseeable future.

This is a partisan exercise by Republicans to divide the American people rather than forge consensus to solve our urgent problems. Our Constitution, which we all take an oath to support and defend, is an enduring and living document that has throughout our history expanded rights, not diminished them.

Though the Federal marriage amendment claims to protect marriage, it benefits no one and actually limits the rights of millions of Americans. In September, I am happy to say, my husband and I will be celebrating our 43rd wedding anniversary. I am a mother of five, we have five children and five grandchildren, expecting our sixth grandchild in October. And we certainly appreciate the value of family.

We see family in our community as a source of strength and a source of comfort to people. What constitutes that family is an individual and personal decision. But for all, it is a place where people find love, comfort and support. As we consider this amendment, we must understand we are talking about our fellow citizens, equal under the law, who are lesbian and gay, and what it means to them. They are members of our communities with dreams and aspirations, including their right to find comfort, love and support on equal terms.

They have every right and every expectation of any American that they are entitled to the very purposes for which this country was founded, that

we are all created equal by our Creator, and endowed with inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Let me tell you about two extraordinary constituents of mine, I have talked about them on the floor before. Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, both in their eighties, and they have lived together for more than 50 years. They are grandparents, by the way, they are grandmothers. Their commitment, their love and their happiness are a source of strength to all who know them.

They are leaders in our community and are held in high esteem by all who know them. Why should they not have the full protection of the law to be able to share each other's health and bereavement benefits, to be able to share all of the protections and rights accruing to financial relationships, inheritance and immigration?

Why should Phyllis and Del and millions of gay and lesbian citizens not be treated equally and not be afforded the legal protections conferred by marriage? I will again vote against this amendment, as I have in the past, because it is counter to the noble ideas of liberty, freedom and equality for which this Nation stands.

This amendment defiles our cherished Constitution by saying that some members of our society are not equal under the law. This is blatant discrimination. It is wrong. It does not belong in our Constitution. It is contrary again to the noble purpose for which this Nation was founded, and it is contrary to the principle of ending discrimination, unifying our country, and fostering equality for all.

The American people demand that this Congress address their priorities: creation of jobs, creating a minimum wage that has not been raised in 9 years, gas prices that are over $3 a gallon, and the skyrocketing cost of higher education. That is what they want us to be doing here.

Mr. Speaker, let us strive to do the work of the American people. Let us strive to unite our country, take our country in a whole new direction, let us honor our Constitution, let us honor all of God's children and let us reject this amendment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER).

Mr. BOEHNER. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Marriage Protection Amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

Mr. Speaker, over the past few days some people have asked me, Why are we having this debate and this vote? I think this is an issue that the American people want their Representatives to debate and to vote on. And that is why it is part of the American Values Agenda that we released last month.

It has been front-page news all across the country, sparking intense debate amongst our fellow citizens. Many people that we represent believe the Congress needs to act. While 45 of the 50 States have either a State constitutional amendment or a statute that preserves the current definition of marriage, left-wing activist judges and officials at the local levels have struck down State laws protecting marriage.

The American people should decide this issue, not out-of-touch judges who are bent on redefining what marriage is for America's moms and dads. Poll after poll shows that the American people don't want marriage to be redefined by judges today and for our children tomorrow.

And protecting the institution of marriage safeguards, I believe, the American family. Studies show that children best flourish when one mom and one dad are there to raise them. And 30 years of social science evidence confirms that children respond best when their mom or dad are married and live at home. And that is why marriage and family law has emphasized the importance of marriage as the foundation of family, addressing the needs of children in the most positive way.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to send a strong message to America's moms and dads rather than allowing judges to redefine marriage. I urge my colleagues to support the amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN).

(Ms. HARMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, how ironic that we consider this discriminatory, so-called marriage protection measure just one week after successfully renewing by a strong bipartisan margin a landmark piece of civil rights legislation, the Voting Rights Act.

The Voting Rights Act brought millions of Americans into the heart of American democracy. It has been a critical milestone in our Nation's ongoing quest to live up to the ideals of equality and freedom embodied in the Constitution. In contrast, today's legislation, if passed, would be a tragic step backwards. Amending the Constitution to limit the rights of a specific group amounts to government-sanctioned discrimination, and tramples on the prerogative of the State to define community values.

Regulation of marriage is historically a State-sanctioned enterprise. How hypocritical it is for those who often invoke States rights to claim this is a Federal issue. I believe I understand something about the cruel effects of discrimination on the individual and society at large.

You see, my father was a refugee from Nazi Germany. His medical school class was the last to graduate before the Nazi purges of Jewish students began. He and some of my family fled Germany a year later.

Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest joys of my life occurred recently. I became a grandmother for the first time.

I urge this House to carefully assess how our action today will impact future generations. And I wish for little Lucy a world in which prejudice and discrimination are mere footnotes in her high school history book. Vote ''no.''

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES).

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I think we can probably agree on today is the opponents of this legislation have questioned why we are even here. Mr. Speaker, I agree with them on that and disagree with them on almost everything else, because it just baffles me, as we think about our Founding Fathers dreaming that we would ever stand here and have to debate the definition of marriage and whether or not that was between a man and a woman.

Earlier today I stood where you are now standing and I listened to some of the words that were used against this legislation. I wrote some of them down. And one of the words was ''hateful.'' And as I wrote that down, all I could think about is if you want a definition of hateful, look at the attacks that have been brought against the sponsor of this piece of legislation across the country for daring to bring it to the floor for debate. That defines hateful.

And then they raised the word ''unimportant.'' And they list all of the other things that they think are important. And that frightens me, because they do not recognize the difference and the importance of the connection between strong marriages in this country and the strength of our Nation.

And then they call it divisive. Divisive to dare to stand against activist judges who will try to redefine literally hundreds of years of historical sanctioning of the institution of marriage. And then they say it is intolerant.

They couch themselves with love, and all they want to do is have love. Well, Mr. Speaker, suppose you have a teacher who loves her 13-year-old student, and just says, all we want to do is love each other and be together. We would never think of sanctioning that. Suppose you have a situation where a husband came in and said I love three wives. Just let me love them. How is that harming society?

I think, Mr. Speaker, you could use every argument you hear on this floor today against this legislation to justify both of those two situations. But, Mr. Speaker, I think one of the things that bothers me most is when we hear the argument that we shouldn't try because this legislation just won't pass.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we try because we believe that values are still important in America. We try because we believe marriage between a man and a woman is a cornerstone of those values. We try

because we believe the only way to protect the rights of States to define marriage for themselves is to pass this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand with those who support this legislation and those who understand that this historic relationship between a man and a woman is worth defending, even if we do not succeed.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) for the purpose of making a unanimous consent request.

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 88.

I believe that the institution of marriage should consist of one man and one woman and I voted for the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, but I cannot support this bill.

The Defense of Marriage Act has never been challenged in the Supreme Court and it seems like we are putting the cart before the horse.

We should allow our system of checks and balances to work as it has for over 200 years. Our founding fathers created three branches of government to work independently, but equally.

In Texas, we already have a law that states that the institution of marriage is between one man and one woman. We also have a law that states that Texas does not have to recognize marriages that were performed outside of the state of Texas.

Even if other states decide to change their standards for issuing marriage licenses. It will not change how marriage licenses are issued in Texas.

The Defense of Marriage Act supports our state laws. Marriage is a state issue and it should remain so. When my wife and I married 36 years ago we went to our county courthouse, not our federal courthouse.

We do not seek marriage licenses from the federal government.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri.

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, in 1974, I was ordained as an elder in the United Methodist Church after having completed 3 years of seminary, 4 years of undergraduate work. I have been pastoring for 32 years. As of today, I have never, ever been asked to perform a wedding between same-sex partners. I do not even know of a minister who has ever been made that request.

And so I am not sure how significant this is, except for the fact that I am not here to defend anything except the church. We have people sitting in the gallery and people looking at this broadcast all across America. And the chances are really high that almost 100 percent of them have marriage licenses signed by a member of the clergy, and not a Member of Congress.

Marriage was ordained by God, and in all of the weddings the words are read, ''Marriage is an institution by God signifying the uniting of this man and this woman in holy matrimony''.

And then we go on to say that, in my tradition, ''Christ adorned and beautified marriage when he performed his first miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee.

□ 1300

Marriage is sacred. It is holy. It is an institution created by the church. Now, the United States Congress is going to trespass on the property of the church?

I am concerned that we have gone too far. Every judicatory or denomination in the world is debating this issue, and it should remain in that domain, not on the floor of Congress. I don't want Congress to approve or disapprove how we perform marriages in my church.

I sat on the front row in December, and I thought about Exodus: For 6 days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a sabbath of rest for the Lord. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death.

As I thought about that, we were sitting here on a Sunday morning debating the defense bill.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out to my friend from Missouri that in order to become States in the United States of America, Arizona and Utah had to change their own State constitutions to recognize marriage as a union between one man and one woman in order to do away with polygamy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ).

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman and thank him for bringing this amendment to the floor and managing the time. I also would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the leadership of my colleague from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE) on this issue. She has been a true champion, not only a champion inside this Chamber, but a champion for the values that I think a vast majority of Americans hold dear. For that she has paid what has already been recognized as a significant personal price. Again, I applaud her and I certainly admire her character and her tenacity.

Mr. Speaker, this debate seems to be framed by talking about what we are against. I think what we ought to be talking about, frankly, is what we are for. Too often in society, especially these days, it seems like we are against the very institutions that made this Nation great.

I see above your head, Mr. Speaker, the words ''in God we trust,'' and directly opposite you over my left shoulder is the medallion of the very first law giver, Moses. We all know where those laws came from, the very hand of God.

I think very often about the fact that we proudly profess that we are founded on Judeo-Christian principles. I think it is indisputable where those principles come from and what the origin of those principles is.

I believe that in the very beginning He created us, yes, all equal. The distinguished minority leader mentioned that a little bit ago, that we celebrate the fact that we were all created equal by our Creator, equal but different, and for a purpose. He showed us that purpose in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve. He showed us once again, and blessed that difference, at Cana, as my friend and colleague from Missouri just referenced, by Jesus performing his first miracle by blessing that wedding feast between a man and a woman.

I think there is a reason why marriage has always been such a sacred institution. I believe some things, some definitions in our society are absolute. Up isn't down, dark isn't daylight, black isn't white, fish isn't fowl, and marriage, since the beginning of time, as close as I can tell, has been between a man and a woman. If it was, indeed, good enough for our Creator, and it was indeed our Creator's plan, that we were created different for an absolute divine purpose, I think we best not be messing with His plan today.

It is important, I will disagree with my colleague from Missouri in this regard, it is very important that when a nation is, indeed, founded upon Judeo-Christian principles that we are willing to stand and define what we are for, lest we forget what we are about.

I strongly encourage the adoption of this amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the constitutional amendment to prohibit same-sex marriage. If this amendment were to pass, it would mean the first time in history that the Constitution has been amended to include discrimination. I believe in marriage as a stabilizing force in our society, as a nurturing environment for our children, as a public expression of the most profound love and devotion of a commitment between two people to take responsibility for one another, in a legal and a personal sense, in sickness and in health.

The vast majority of marriages are, and, of course always will be, between one man and one woman. But the same virtues of couplehood apply to any loving adults.

Surely the 27-year relationship of my dear friends Michael and Roger does not threaten my marriage in any way. The loving family that Ann and Jackie expanded when they adopted David, giving him two adoring parents, is a good thing, regardless what anyone may say to the contrary, although they are free to say it.

But nothing in the Constitution should be established to exclude them from the rights that they deserve. There are so many pressing issues right now that are working, that undermine families.

Same-sex couples embrace the positive values of families. Let's spend our

limited time here as lawmakers helping all American families, and not discriminating against any.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I would point out that if this amendment does, in fact, make marriage, well, discriminate, and the opponents want to make marriage more inclusive, then is it not also true that we should and will broaden the definition of marriage, so that as Mr. FORBES from Virginia pointed out it is not merely a matter of one same-sex couple.

But why are we tripping over the word ''couple''? Why can't marriage be three people or four people? Why can't it be a combination, if that is what we are talking about.

I want to point that out to my friends, that this doesn't just end with being one definition or the other if you don't want to go with this definition.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I want to say amen to everything my colleagues who have just spoken before me, Mr. FORBES and Mr. BEAUPREZ, said. They made very eloquent arguments.

Mr. Speaker, if Members of the House vote as their States have voted on this amendment, the amendment will pass. Forty-five States have defined marriage as the union of a man and a woman. As a sociologist, I taught, and I believe, that marriage is the foundational institution of every culture. It is under attack by the courts. It needs to be defended in this way by defining it as the union of a man and a woman.

If it is going to be defined otherwise, it must be done by the legislatures and not by the courts. Today we are going to vote on a constitutional amendment to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman. This is about who is going to determine the definition, whether it is the courts or the legislative bodies.

The amendment is about how we are going to raise the next generation. How are they going to be raised? It is a fundamental issue for our families and for our future. It is an issue for the people. It is not an issue that the courts should resolve.

Those of us who support this amendment are doing so in an effort to let the people decide. We are making progress in America on defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman and will not stop until it is defined and protected as that union. Marriage is about our future. I continue to be struck by the opponents of this amendment, who say it is an effort to promote discrimination. The amendment is about promoting our future, our families, about how we raise the next generation and about allowing a definition of marriage that is as old as the creation of human beings.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his leadership. Of course, I stand in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88.

This amendment seeks to enshrine, and it does seek to enshrine, discrimination into our Constitution. As an African American woman, and as a person of faith, there is no way that I can support discriminating against anybody. The history of our Nation has been a long process of bringing people of different backgrounds together.

This amendment would take everything that this Nation stands for as a beacon of hope, a land of opportunity, and a tolerant, democratic society and turn it all on its head. Government should not be in the business of discriminating against its people, pure and simple. Government should not get into the personal lives of individuals.

We must reject this, and it is a hateful and discriminatory amendment. It takes an extraordinary step that previous amendments have not taken. It bars States from granting pretty much any legal partnership such as civil unions or domestic partnerships.

Congress is supposed to work to promote a better life for all Americans. That means improving our Nation's education system, working to provide health care for the 47 million uninsured, ensuring that people have a roof over their heads.

We must see this amendment for what it is. It is clearly election-year pandering. It is an attempt to create a diversion from the real issues that this Congress should be dealing with.

This is clear election year pandering. This is simply an attempt to create a diversion from the real issues this Congress should be dealing with.

It's also an amendment once again enshrouded in an attempt to cloud the public's image of same-gender couples. They want to fill everyone's head with images of gay couples marching into churches and demanding marriage equality. This has nothing, nothing at all to do with churches and marriage.

The Republican Leadership wants to rile up the religious right with the idea that this has to do with an attempt to force religious institutions to sanctify same-sex couples.

Same-sex couples merely want the same rights that many take for granted; hospital visitation rights, health care benefits, inheritance rights, and joint tax-filing. These all come with civil ceremonies, through a license granted by a local county or city, not through an order signed by a church or any religious institution. We must make clear, this is about equal rights.

I urge my colleagues, and the public, to see this amendment for what it is really for. A mere political diversion tactic and an attempt to write hate into the Constitution.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I would invite the previous speaker, my friend, to watch one of the 527 ads that are being run against Mrs. MUSGRAVE. If she wants to see hateful speech, and one of the most hideous hateful acts that I have witnessed on any Member of Congress, I would invite anybody who is talking about hate to watch the ads that are run against our colleague for sponsorship of this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS).

Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I will be voting for the amendment. I have got questions, though. Why now? Why this amendment? Why now?

No court has ordered the State of South Carolina to recognize a Massachusetts marriage. In fact, it is all within any given State. If a court had ordered South Carolina to recognize a Massachusetts marriage, this amendment would not be failing today on the House floor, as we all know it will. It would be passing with a significant margin.

I also have a question about why this amendment. Why not a federalism amendment? Why not an amendment that honors the 10th amendment to the Constitution that says that all powers not delegated to the Federal Government are reserved to the States?

As it is, this amendment is not what it should be. It should be a federalism amendment. It should be an amendment that says States have the prerogative to define marriage within their boundaries. As it is, we are providing a Federal definition of marriage, or attempting to do so, in this amendment that will fail.

I think it is also important to ask why this amendment, and to point out that no one should be under the misimpression that we are here mandating, let's say, a biblical definition of marriage. If we were, we would be directing the States only to grant divorces on the biblical basis of infidelity. But nobody is proposing such an amendment.

Why? Because we have avoided the dangers of a theocracy. I agree with what my colleague from Missouri said earlier, Mr. CLEAVER: this is the church's business. This is the synagogue's business. This is the business of the mosque to figure out what is marriage within their definition.

Now, when a State gets involved, it is really just about children and the result of divorce. Why now? Why this amendment? But yet the question is simply brought up, so we vote for it.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I do believe in the separation of church and State, as one asked the question that we should be talking about what we believe in.

□ 1315

I believe in the 10th amendment and its constitutional premise: ''The powers not delegated to the United States

by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.''

My good friend who just spoke from South Carolina made a very valid point, that we are now tampering with constitutional privileges that we have yielded to the States, and more importantly, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution have made it very clear that it is a document of enhancement, of affirmation of rights.

My concern is that we are now standing on the floor of this sacred body denying rights to human beings and Americans. We are denying the rights, the privacy rights, civil liberties rights. We are even going so far as to deny visitation rights at hospitals and the ability to mourn your loved one.

Might I say that this past week a dear, beloved friend of mine mourned his partner, mourned his partner, and all of the community came to acknowledge the leadership of his partner. Is his grief or his loss to be degraded on this floor, to be denied, to ask the question whether it was not a special and sacred relationship?

So I ask my colleagues, as we corrected the enslavement of those of us who came here first in the bottom of the belly of a slave boat with the 13th, 14th and 15th amendment, affirmation of rights, creating rights, not denying rights, I will not stand here on the floor today and accept the responsibility of denying rights. Might I say, the Senate, the other body, has already spoken. They could not get a simple majority. Why? It is wrong to deny rights to Americans.

I will not allow the flag to be desecrated by this amendment. Defeat this constitutional offering and bring back freedom to America.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is the symbol of the misplaced priorities of the Republican leadership in the House. It is clear that this amendment is being addressed not for the policy involved but simply for floor debate. We have considered this issue in Congress before, and doing so again is simply a waste of taxpayers' money. This debate is ill-advised and will not help the American people. Issues we could be addressing here today are: the global war on terrorism we are fighting, from which we have been distracted by the war in Iraq, and a war that has resulted in a devastating toll on American lives and our budget; the crisis in the Middle East; increasing gas prices; a ballooning budget deficit of over $5 trillion that is choking our economy and crucial social service programs; and a health care system that is failing the millions of Americans that remain uninsured.

Why are we wasting time on the House floor, in our legislative offices and with our valuable staff to handle this imprudent amendment?

I oppose this bill because, for the first time in America's rich and long democratic history, the Constitution will be used not as a beacon of liberation but an instrument of deprivation. On the 230-year anniversary of our Constitution, let us not desecrate it by enacting this act. H.J. Res. 88, the ''Marriage Protection Amendment,'' proposes to impose the opinion of a minority of the members of this Congress on the lives of all Americans on matters that concern their personal lives, their family relations, and their very identity.

TENTH AMENDMENT

The 10th Amendment states: ''The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.'' The individual states need to have the ability to differ with the Federal Government in an area that relates to what goes on in the homes of individuals.

EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAW

Gay and lesbian Americans are American citizens who pay taxes and protect our communities as fire fighters, police officers, and by serving in the military, and therefore desire the same rights and protections as other Americans.

Denying gay and lesbian couples the right to marry amounts to a federal taking—legal rights in pensions, health insurance, hospital visitations, and inheritance that other long-term committed couples enjoy. It should never be our job to restrict the rights of the American people—only to extend them. This amendment would write discrimination into our Constitution.

As Members of Congress with the authorities vested in us as a body, we have a responsibility to deal with issues that need attention. There is no emergent need relating to individual well-being, national security, or any other government interest that warrants a constitutional amendment for this purpose. This is a waste of the taxpayers' dollars. This Amendment takes away existing legal protections, under state and local laws, for committed, long-term couples, such as hospital visitation rights, inheritance rights, pension benefits, and health insurance coverage among others.

Under current law, marriage is a decision of the state. As marriage was initially tied to property rights, this has historically always been a local issue. The state gives us a marriage license, determines a couples' tax bracket and authorizes its divorce. It does not need additional control over the situation. Religious conceptions of marriage are sacrosanct and should remain so, but how a state decides to dole out hospital visitation rights or insurance benefits should be a matter of state law. As legal relationships change, laws adapt accordingly.

Matters of great importance, such as marriage, need to reflect the will of the people and be resolved within the democratic process. By having Congress give the states restrictions initially, we are denying them the chance to let their constituents decide what is best for them. We cannot use the Constitution as a bullhorn to dictate social policy from Washington.

Furthermore, any law determining who may or may not marry denies religious institutions the right to decide this amongst themselves and is therefore a denial of the religious freedoms that we treasure so dearly.

Leading civil rights and religious organizations across the Nation have expressed their opposition to this amendment. Among them are: the Anti-Defamation League; the Alliance of Baptists; the American Civil Liberties Union; the League of Women Voters of the United States; the American Jewish Committee; the NAACP; and many more.

I have here in my hand a letter to Representatives HASTERT and PELOSI, signed by over 2,500 members of the clergy in our Nation. They come from different faiths and backgrounds, and may disagree on many things, but they all oppose this amendment.

This proposed amendment will forever write discrimination into the U.S. Constitution rather than focusing on the crucial problems and challenges that affect the lives of all of us. It is nothing more than a political distraction for the country to divert attention from the overabundance of real problems and our tremendous lack of effective solutions.

VIOLATION OF PRIVACY

Our civil liberties are based upon the fundamental premise that each individual has a right to privacy, to be free from governmental interference in the most personal, private areas of one's life. Deciding when and whether to have children is one of those areas. Marriage is another.

In 1965 the Supreme Court ruled in Griswold v. Connecticut that a married couple had the right to use birth control. In doing so, the Court recognized a ''zone of privacy'' implicit in various provisions of the Constitution. Most recently, the Supreme Court struck down a law criminalizing sex between same-sex couples in Lawrence v. Texas based upon these same principles.

Indeed, Lawrence relied principally on Griswold, Eisenstadt and Roe v. Wade. Collectively, these decisions recognize the fundamental principle that the Constitution protects individuals' decisions about marriage, procreation, contraception and family relationships. The issues are inextricably linked—in law as well as policy.

THERE IS NO VALID NEED TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

Amending the Constitution is a radical act that should only be undertaken to address great public-policy needs. Since the adoption of the Bill of Rights, in 1791, the Constitution has been amended only 17 times. Moreover, the Constitution should be amended only to protect and expand, not limit, individual freedoms. By contrast, the Marriage Protection Amendment is an attempt to restrict liberties, and on a discriminatory basis.

DEFENSE OF MARRIAGE ACT ALREADY EXISTS

The Defense of Marriage Act, which President Bill Clinton signed into law in 1996, already exists and recognizes marriage as a heterosexual union for purposes of federal law only. DOMA was designed to provide individual states individual autonomy in deciding how to recognize marriage and other unions within their borders. This allowed legislators the latitude to decide how to deal with marriage rights themselves, while simultaneously stating that no state could force another to recognize marriage of same sex couples. For those who want to take a stance on marriage alone, DOMA should quell their fears. We do not need additional, far reaching legislation.

MPA WILL NOT CHANGE VIEWS ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE

The Federal government cannot use its influence to change people's minds about a social issue. It did not work in the 1920s when the 18th amendment declared alcohol to be illegal and it did not work in the 1960s when interracial marriage was still considered a crime. This amendment will not change the lives of those who want to live as a married couple; all it will do is take away their license to do so.

THIS WILL CLOG THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The MPA is a lawyer's dream and a judge's nightmare. The number of cases that will flood

the system will be outlandish. Does the MPA retroactively invalidate all marriages that have occurred in the interim? If a spouse has died, how does the retroactive annulment effect custody of the children, or property rights? There will be a litany of case law brought out to deal with these questions, and our judicial system will be filled with cases trying to sort out the lasting effects of the MPA.

THIS IS LIKELY TO FAIL

Amending the constitution is not a simple thing, and should be done with care and caution over a longer period of time. Our haste in this matter will be the tragic flaw of the MPA's journey. Recent polls show that a majority of people who oppose gay marriage also oppose amending the constitution to ban them. In addition, this amendment has already been considered in the Senate and was rejected.

MPA DOES NOT HELP FAMILIES

Many of my colleagues are arguing that the MPA is here to protect the family. Spending time and resources to amend the constitution to prevent gay marriages is not helping a single family. Divorce, abuse, unwed motherhood, and unemployment are doing far more harm to millions of families everywhere. To those who are taking up the cause to protect American families, perhaps your attention could be focused elsewhere on the problems which are truly plaguing them.

The vocal proponents of the MPA show their strong and willful hatred of the gay and lesbian community. This egregious amendment would enshrine discrimination against a specific group of citizens and intolerance of specific religious beliefs into our Nation's most sacred document. The fight for equality is uniquely woven into our Nation's history. From the suffrage movement, to the civil rights movement, to the gay rights movement, minorities in this country have worked tirelessly to achieve the equal rights guaranteed to all.

THE LEGAL INCIDENT OF MARRIAGE WARRANTS A LICENSE

Marriage provides a multitude of critical protections to same sex couples and their children. These legal incidents include rights related to: group insurance; victim's compensation; worker's compensation; durable powers of attorney; family leave benefits; and a joint tax return.

These benefits are necessary for families to function. If "marriage" is truly a license that extends rights, it should not be denied to one group of people—otherwise, this body will be guilty of legislating in violation of the Equal Protections Clause of the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, again, I urge my colleagues to defeat this resolution.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN).

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, if I could just respond to the question of federalism.

There is a mistake on this floor when people are talking about this being a violation of federalism. Federalism, properly understood, is a check on the power of the Federal Government by the State government and vice versa.

The reason why the federalism issue does not apply here is because marriage and the family is likewise an institution, although a private one, which provides a countervailing source of power vis-a-vis the government, and there are lot of arguments on the floor. It is too bad we do not have a lot more time to talk about it.

The simple question, though, is are we going to fundamentally change the definition of marriage, understood in this country since its founding, and allow a preferential status for marriage properly understood? That is what we are really talking about. It is not discrimination. It is the question of whether you allow the traditional form of marriage to be given preferential status.

Those that argue against this amendment do not want that to be the case anymore. They are the ones that are overturning history and overturning the way things have been done for several hundred years in this country and thousands of years in this culture.

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

Federalism is the division of power between the Federal Government and the States. Family law, marriage, divorce have always been a matter for the States. This amendment attempts to seize it for the Federal Government. That is a major change in federalism, whatever the gentleman from California may say.

It is most certainly an issue of federalism because the Federal Government has never before gotten into the definition of marriage or divorce or any of those things. It has always been left to the States until this amendment.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank my friend from New York, and Mr. Speaker, I rise to oppose this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the grave crisis that a constitutional amendment demands. I will tell you what the grave crises are that we should be spending our time on.

North Korea tested a ballistic missile last week. We are still waiting for a strategy for success in Iraq. Gas prices are skyrocketing. War is erupting in the Middle East. And Congress wants the American people to believe that same-sex marriages are the gravest threat to their security.

We need to be focusing on issues of true security and safety for the American people and not on rhetorical devices that have no substantive meaning, because the other body already defeated it.

Mr. Speaker, I spent all morning this morning at the National Defense University participating in a military exercise with respect to Iran's development of nuclear weapons. I spent my time trying to figure out how we are going to protect the American people from that threat, and then I come to the floor of the House, and we waste time debating how we are going to protect the American people from same-sex marriages when we cannot even amend the Constitution in this session of Congress.

If we spent more time trying to hunt down Osama bin Laden and less time trying to hunt down people in marriages that we find objectionable, we would all be safer.

Now, I have a deep respect for my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and on the other side of this issue, but I would suggest that the American people want us focused on real security and real safety.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, if I can ask the gentleman from New York, I have one more speaker. Then we are ready to close.

Mr. NADLER. I will yield to Ms. JACKSON-LEE for a unanimous consent request, and then you have your speaker, and I will close for my side and you close for yours. Let me ask how much time we have left at this point.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILLMOR). The gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) has 3 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) has 4¼ minutes remaining.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for a unanimous consent request.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I insert into the RECORD at this point the Clergy for Fairness, Religious Leaders Opposed to the Federal Marriage Amendment, that shows the standing of the religious community of America. It is entitled: "We, the People."

CLERGY FOR FAIRNESS,
Washington, DC, July 7, 2006.

Rep. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House,
Washington, DC.
Rep NANCY PELOSI,
House Minority Leader,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REP. HASTERT AND REP. PELOSI: As clergy from a broad spectrum of religious traditions we hold diverse views regarding marriage. However, we are united in our opposition to amending the U.S. Constitution to define marriage.

The Marriage Protection Amendment raises alarming constitutional concerns. We do not favor using the constitutional amendment process to resolve the divisive issues of the moment. Loading down the Constitution with such amendments weakens the enormous influence it holds as the key document that binds our nation together.

We are concerned that the Marriage Protection Amendment would mark the first time in history that an amendment to the Constitution would restrict the civil rights of an entire group of Americans. Misusing our nation's most cherished document for this purpose would tarnish our proud tradition of expanding citizens' rights by Constitutional amendment, a tradition long supported by America's faith communities. These concerns alone merit rejection of the Marriage Protection Amendment.

We also share a serious concern that the proposed Marriage Protection Amendment would infringe on religious liberty.

Thoughtful people of faith can and do disagree on the issue of marriage. America's many religious traditions reflect this diversity of opinion, as do we who sign this letter.

But we respect the right of each religious group to decide, based on its own religious teachings, whether or not to sanction marriage of same-sex couples. It is surely not the federal government's role to prefer one religious definition of marriage over another, much less to codify such a preference in the Constitution. To the contrary: the great contribution of our Constitution is to ensure religious liberty for all.

Some argue that a constitutional amendment is necessary to ensure that clergy and faith groups will never be forced to recognize marriages of same-sex couples against their will. This argument is unfounded. Such coercion is already expressly forbidden by the First Amendment's ''establishment'' clause, its guarantee of the right to ''free exercise'' of religion, and the Supreme Court's doctrine of religious autonomy that is rooted in both religion clauses. These, and only these, are all the protection of religious autonomy—and of religious marriage—our nation needs.

Our nation's founders adopted the First Amendment precisely because they understood the dangers of allowing government to have control over religious doctrine and decisions. It is this commitment to religious freedom that has allowed religious practice and pluralism to flourish in America as nowhere else. If this freedom is to be maintained, we must respect the rights of faith communities to apply their own religious teachings and values to the issue of same-sex relationships. It is surely not the business of politicians to assert control over the doctrine and practice of our faith communities.

The Marriage Protection Amendment would dignify discrimination and undermine religious liberty. America's religious communities do not support this amendment. As leaders of these communities, we urge you to vote against any attempt to pass this Amendment.

Respectfully,

Rev. Richard K. Heacock, Jr., United Methodist, Fairbanks, AK.

Rev. Janice A. Hotze, Episcopal, St. Michael and All Angels, Haines, AK.

Rev. Dale Kelley, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Unalaska, AK.

Rev. Robert Thomas, Jr., Episcopal, St. Peter's, Seward, AK.

Rev. Diana Jordan Allende, Unitarian Universalist, Auburn UU Fellowship, Auburn, AL.

Rabbi Jeffrey Ballon, Jewish, Bnai Shalom, Huntsville, AL.

The Rev. James Creasy, Episcopal, Opelika, AL.

Rev. Peter M. Horn, Episcopal, Vestavia Hills, AL.

Mr. Steven T. Karnes, Jewish, Kingdom Of Yahwey Assembly, Phenix City, AL.

Rev. Ruth B. LaMonte, Episcopal, Trinity Church, Birmingham, AL.

Rev. Lynette Lanphere, Episcopalian, Leeds, AL.

Rev. Elizabeth L. O'Neill, Presbyterian, Immanuel PCUSA, Montgomery, AL.

Rev. Marjorie F. Ragona, Metropolitan Community Churches, Bethel, Birmingham, AL.

Rev. Mary C. Robert, Episcopal, All Saints, Mobile, AL.

Rev. Alice I. Syltie, Unitarian Universalist, UU Church of Huntsville Alabama, Huntsville, AL.

Rev. Jack Zylman, Unitarian Universalist Church of Birmingham, Birmingham, AL.

Pastor Robert Anderson, Lutheran, Hot Springs Village, AR.

Rev. Alma T. Beck, Episcopal, St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Sharon M. Coote, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Pulaski Heights Christian Church, Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Stephen J. Copley, Mr. United Methodist Church, North Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Gerald G. Crawford, II, Episcopal, St. Mark's, Crossett, AR.

Rev. Marc Fredette, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fayetteville, Fayetteville, AR.

Rev. Dr. Raymond Hearn, Presbyterian, Hot Springs Village, AR.

Rev. Robert Klein, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Church of Little Rock, Little Rock, AR.

Rabbi Eugene H. Levy, Jewish, B'nai Israel, Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Samuel C. Loudenslager, Episcopalian, St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Bigelow, AR.

Rev. Betty Grace McCollum, Unitarian Universalist, Emerson, AR.

Rev. Phillip R. Plunkett, Episcopal, Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Donna L. Rountree, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Scott, AR.

Rev. Anne Russ, PCUSA, Grace Presbyterian, Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Dan R. Thornhill, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Parkview Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Little Rock, AR.

Rev. Kenneth Reuel Ahlstrand, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Beautiful Savior, Oro Valley, AZ.

Rev. Rosemary G. Anderson, United Methodist, Apache Junction, AZ.

The Rev. Susan Anderson-Smith, Episcopal, St. Philip's In the Hills, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Leslie S. Argueta-Vogel, Presbyterian (USA), Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Curtis A. Beardsley, Independant Catholic, Reyna del Tepeya, Apostolic Catholic Church of Antioch, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Franklyn Bergen, Episcopalian, St.Andrew's Tucson, AZ, Tucson, AZ.

Rabbi Alan Berlin, Jewish, Scottsdale, AZ.

Rev. Andre R. Boulanger, MA, STL, Roman Catholic, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Larry David Bridge, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) & United Church of Christ, Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ, Scottsdale, AZ.

Rabbi Mari Chernow, Jewish, Temple Chai, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Rula Colvin, Methodist, Gilbert, AZ.

Rev. James Dew, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Santa Cruz Lutheran Church, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Barbara D. Doerrer-Peacock, United Church of Christ, South Mountain Community Church, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Richard Doerrer-Peacock, United Church of Christ, South Mountain Community Church, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Dr. Eric Elnes, United Church of Christ, Scottsdale Congregational United Church of Christ, Scottsdale, AZ.

Rev. Barbara M. Farwell, Presbyterian, Serving as chaplain in lifecare community, Sun City, AZ.

Rev. Mary S. Harris, Presbyterian, Tucson, AZ.

The Rev. Robert Harvey, Episcopal, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. William H. Jacobs, Disciples of Christ, First Christian Church of Mesa, AZ, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Dawn E. Keller, ELCA, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Steve J. Keplinger, Episcopalian, St. David's, Page, AZ.

Rev. Delores J. Kropf, Ecumenical Catholic, St. Mihael's Ecumenical Catholic Church, Tucson, AZ.

Fr. Gordon K. McBride, Episcopal, Grace St. Paul's, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Gary N. McCluskey, Lutheran (ELCA), University Lutheran, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Marc E. McDonald, United Methodist, Hope UMC, Bullhead City, AZ.

Fr. Brian H. O. A. McHugh, Episcopal, Coolidge, AZ.

Rev. Lee J. Milligan, United Church of Christ, Church of the Painted Hills, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Kimberly Murman, Presbyterian Church (USA), Mesa, AZ.

Rev. Briget Nicholson, United Church of Christ, First, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. James Parkhurst, United Methodist, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. David W. Ragan, United Church of Christ, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Rod Richards, Unitarian Universalist, UU Church of SE Arizona, Bisbee, AZ.

Rev. Ann Rogers-Witte, United Church of Christ, Shadow Rock UCC, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Liana Rowe, UCC, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Ron Rude, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Anne Sawyer, Episcopal, St. Andrew's, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. Kelli M. Shepard, Lutheran, Faith Lutheran, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Gerry Straatemeier, MSW, Religious Science, Tucson, AZ.

Rev. James Strader, Episcopal, University of Arizona Episcopal Campus Ministry, Tucson, AZ.

Rabbi Andrew Straus, Jewish, Temple Emanuel of Tempe, Tempe, AZ.

Rev. Charlotte Strayhorne, Independent, Casa de Cristo Evangelical Church, Phoenix, AZ.

Rabbi Lisa Tzur, Jewish, Temple Gan Elohim, Scottsdale, AZ.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Wayles, United Church of Christ, 1st Congregational UCC, Phoenix, AZ, Phoenix, AZ.

Rev. Fletch Wideman, United Church of Christ, Shadow Rock UCC, Glendale, AZ.

Rev. Susan K. Wintz, MDiv, BCC, Presbyterian Church (USA), Mesa, AZ.

Deborah J. Davis, Jewish, Humanistic Jewish Congregation, San Diego, CA.

Rev. Luke Adams, Independent Catholic Churches International, Order of St. Luke the Healer, Oakland, CA.

Rev. Joseph M. Amico, United Church of Christ, Sunland, CA.

Rev. John Anderson, Presbyterian, San Francisco, CA.

Rev. Charlotte L. Asher, United Church of Christ, Redwood City, Redwood City, CA.

Rev. Joy Atkinson, Unitarian Universalist, Berkeley, CA.

Susan J. Averbach, Jewish Humanist, Kol Hadash, San Francisco, CA.

Fr. Michael A. Backlund, PhD, The Episcopal Church, St. Paul's Church, Sacramento, Angels Camp, CA.

Rev. Connie Zekas Bailey, RSI International, Vista, San Marcos, CA.

Rev. Keith G. Banwart, Jr., Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, St. Matthew's Church, Glendale, CA.

Rev. Erwin C. Barron, PCUSA, Old First Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, CA.

Rev. Hank Bates, Independent Religious Science, Palm Springs, CA.

Rabbi Haim Beliak, Jewish, Beth Shalom of Whittier, Los Angeles, CA.

Fr. John A. Bell, New Church Inclusive Anglican Reform, St. Savior—San Francisco, Oakland, CA.

Rabbi Elissa Ben-Naim, Reform Jewish, Los Angeles, CA.

Rev. David L. Bennett, United Methodist, Central United Methodist, Stockton, CA.

Fr. William S. Bennett, OHC, Episcopal, Santa Barbara, CA.

Rev. Dr. Gaye G. Benson, United Methodist, El Sobrante, CA, Richmond, CA.

Rev. Susan Bergmans, Episcopal, San Pablo, CA.

Rabbi Michael Berk, Reform Jewish, San Francisco, CA.

Rabbi Linda Bertenthal, Jewish, Union for Reform Judaism, Los Angeles, CA.

Fr. Robert L. Bettinger, PHD, Episcopalian, San Diego, CA.

Rev. Elizabeth A. Brick, United Methodist, St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, Sacramento, Sacramento, CA.

Rev. David Brickman, Interfaith Temple, Hollywood, CA.
Rabbi Rick Brody, Jewish, Temple Ami Shalom, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Mary Sue Brookshire, Baptist/UCC, UCC La Mesa, La Mesa, CA.
Rev. Clark. M. Brown, Lutheran (ELCA), St. Timothy Lutheran, Monterey, CA.
Rabbi Jeffrey Brown, Reform Judaism, Temple Solel, Cardiff, CA.
Ms. Eileen O. Brownell, Religious Science, Chico, Chico, CA .
Rev. Richard E. Bruner, United Methodist, Claremont UMC, Hesperia, CA.
Paul A. Buch, Jewish, Temple Beth Israel, Pomona, CA.
Rev. Donna Byrns, Church of Truth, Pasadena, CA.
Rev. Jolene J. Cadenbach, United Church of Christ, Arcadia Congregational, Arcadia, CA.
Rev. Anite J. Cadonau-Huseby, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Danville, CA.
Br. Richard Jonathan Cardarelli, SSF, Anglican, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Helen Carroll, Unitarian Universalist, Atascadero, CA.
Rev. Jan Chase, Unity, Unity of Pomona, Pomona, CA.
Rev. Marilyn Chilcote, Presbyterian, First Presbyterian, Oakland Oakland, CA.
Rev. Kelly Dahlgren Childress, United Church of Christ, Oakland, CA.
Rev. Abbot Neil V. Christensen, c.s.e.f., Th.D., Catholic, Community of Sts. Elizabeth of Hungary & Farancis de Sales, Interdenominational, Sacramento, CA.
Rev. Jan Christian, Unitarian Universalist, UU Church of Ventura, Ventura, CA.
Rev. Maureen Christopher, Religious Science, Hospice Chaplain, Oxnard, CA.
Rev. William M. Clyma, III, New Church-Inclusive Anglican Reform, Church of St. Savior, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Kenneth W. Collier, PhD, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara, CA.
Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels, Jewish, Beth Shir Sholom, Santa Monica, CA.
Rev. Catherine Costas, Episcopalian, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Mountain View, CA.
Rev. Lyn Cox, Unitarian Universaiist, UU Society of Sacramento, Sacramento, CA.
Rev. Stuart P. Coxhead, Jr., Episcopal, Burlingame, CA.
Rev. Susan H. Craig, Presbyterian Church (USA), Pasadena, CA.
Fr. Norman L. Cram, Episcopal, Sonoma, CA.
Rev. Robert Warren Cromey, Episcopalian, Trinity, SF, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Sandra R. Decker, Interfaith, Kensington, CA.
Rev. Nancy S. DeNero, UCC, Mount Hollywood Congregational UCC, Pasadena, CA.
Rev. Kristi L. Denham, United Church of Christ, Congregational Church of Belmont, San Mateo, CA.
Rabbi Lavey Derby, Jewish, Kol Shofar, Mill Valley, CA.
Rev. Brian K. Dixon, Alliance of Baptists, Dolores Street Baptist Church, San Francisco. CA.
Rabbi Joel C. Dobin, D.D., Reform, Walnut Creek, CA.
Rev. James Dollins, United Methodist, San Dieguito UMC, Vista, CA.
Rev. Richard F. Drasen, Religious Science, Palm Springs Church for Today, Palm Springs, CA.
Rev. Michael G. Dresbach, Episcopal, San Cristbal, Panama, San Jose, CA.
Rev. Doris L. Dunn, United Church of Christ, Citrus Heights, CA.
Rev. Dale K. Edmondson, American Baptist, San Leandro, CA.
Br. Kenneth Ehrnman, EACA, Laguna Woods, CA.
Rev. Michael Ellard, Metropolian Community Churches, MCC San Jose, San Jose, CA.
Rev. Brian Elster, Evangelical Lutheran (ELCA), Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Oxnard, CA.
Rev. Richard K. Ernst, United Methodist, Loomis, CA.
Rev. Alejandro Escoto, MCCLA's Latino Congregation, West Hollywood, CA.
Rev. Stefanie Etzbach-Dale, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Kern County, Bakersfield, CA, Santa Monica, CA.
Rev. Martha Fahncke, Christian, Temple City, CA.
Rev. John Fanestil, United Methodist, La Mesa, CA.
Rev. Carol C. Faust, Protestant—Universal Life, Oakdale, CA.
Rev. Robert H. Fernandez, Presbyterian (USA), San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Lydia Ferrante-Roseberry, Unitarian Universalist, Oakland, CA.
Rev. Marylee Fithian, United Methodist, Guerneville, CA.
Rabbi Joel R. Fleekop, Jewish, Shir Hadash, Los Gatos, CA.
Msr. Carlos A. Florido, OSF, Orthodox Catholic, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. John C. Forney, Episcopal, Progressive Christians Uniting, Chino, CA.
Rev. Ernest M. Fowler, United Church of Christ, 1st Congregational Church, Long Beach, CA, Laguna Woods, CA.
Rev. Jerry Fox, United Methodist, San Jose, CA.
Rabbi Karen L. Fox, Jewish, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. David French, United Methodist, Temecula, CA.
Rev. Mary M. Gaines, Episcopal, St. James, SF, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Bruce R. Gililland, Alliance of Christian Churches, Sunnyvale, CA.
Rev. Deborah Beach Giordano, Independent Methodist, inklings, Castro Valley, CA.
Rabbi Eva Goldfinger, Humanistic Judaism, Adat Chaverim Valley Congregation for Humanistic Judaism, Valley Glen, CA.
Rabbi Evan Goodman, Jewish, Congregation Beth Israel-Judea, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Thomas H. Griffith, United Methodist, Woodland Hills United Methodist Church, Woodland Hills, CA.
Rev. Anthony Guillen, Episcopal, Ventura, CA.
Rev. Caroline J. Hall, Episcopalian, St Benedicts Los Osos, Los Osos, CA.
Rev. Jim Hamilton, United Methodist, Redondo Beach, CA.
Dr. Frank S. Hamilton, Presbyterian Church (USA), Santa Rosa, CA.
Rev. Sally Hamini, Unitarian Universalist, UU Church of Buffalo, Berkeley, CA.
Rev. M. Elisabet Hannon, United Church of Christ, Wesley United Methodist Church, Fresno, CA.
Rev. Pharis Harvey, United Methodist, Corralitos, CA.
Dr. Kathy Hearn, United Church of Religious Science, La Jolla, CA.
Rev. Patricia D. Hendrickson, Episcopal Thousand Oaks, CA.
Rev. Carol C. Hilton, Unitarian Universalist, Palomar U.U. Fellowship, Vista, CA, Oceanside, CA.
Rev. Daniel M. Hooper, Evangelical Lutheran, Hollywood Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. H. James Hopkins, American Baptist, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland, CA.
Rev. Ricky Hoyt, Unitarian Universalist, Santa Clarita, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Thomas B. Hubbard, Episcopal, Claremont, CA.
Rev. Joan G. Huff, Presbyterian Church (USA), 7th Avenue Presbyterian Church, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Bill Hutchinson, United Church of Christ, Sonoma, CA.
Rev. Scott T. Imler, United Methodist Church, Crescent Heights UMC, West Hollywood, CA.
Rev. Rebecca Irelan, United Methodist, Novato UMC, Novato, CA.
Rev. Steve C. Islander, United Methodist, Estero Bay UMC, Atascadero, CA.
Rabbi Steven Jacobs, Jewish, Woodland Hills, CA.
Rev. Mark J. Jaufmann, Ecumenical Catholic, St. Andrew & St. Paul Ecumenical Catholic, Community, Woodland Hills, CA.
Rev. Bryan Jessup, Unitarian Universalist, Fresno California, Fresno, CA.
Rev. Beth A. Johnson, Unitarian Universalist, Palomar Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Vista, CA.
Rev. Jay E. Johnson, PhD, Episcopal, Church of the Good Shepherd, Berkeley, Richmond, CA.
Rev. Kevin A. Johnson, UCC and Methodist, Bloom in the Desert Ministries, Palm Springs, CA.
Rev. Allan B. Jones, United Methodist, Christ Church United Methodist, Santa Rosa, CA.
Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones, Unitarian Universalist, First Unitarian Church of San Jose, San Jose, CA.
Rev. Robert Angus Jones, Methodist, Oakland, CA.
Rev. Sally J. Juarez, PCUSA, Oakland, CA.
Rabbi Yoel Kahn, Jewish, JCCSF, San Francisco, CA,
Rev. Sheila M. Kane, United Methodist, Riverside, CA.
Evan Kent, Jewish, Temple Isaiah, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. David L. Klingensmith, United Church of Christ, Fresno, CA.
Rev. Patricia L. Klink, Religious Science, Fillmore Church of Religious Science, Fillmore, CA.
Rev. Peter D. Krey, PhD., E.L.C.A., Christ Lutheran, Albany, CA
Rabbi Brett Krichiver, Jewish, Stephen S. Wise Temple, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Kathleen F. La Point-Collup, United Methodist, Elk Grove UMC, Elk Grove, CA.
Rev. Peter Laarman, United Church of Christ, Los Angeles, CA.
Rabbi Gail Labovitz, Jewish-Conservative, University of Judaism, Los Angeles, CA.
Rabbi Howard Laibson, Jewish, Seal Beach, CA.
Rev. Darcey Laine, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA.
Rev. Jeffrey P. Lambkin, Sr., Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Church in Idaho Falls, Richmond, CA.
Rev. Scott Landis, United Church of Christ, Mission Hills, San Diego, CA.
Rev. Joseph A. Lane, Episcopal, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Belmont, CA.
Rev. Peter R Lawson, Episcopalian, St. James', San Francisco, Valley Ford, CA.
Rabbi Steven Z. Leder, Jewish, Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles, CA.
Rabbi Michael Lerner, Jewish, Beyt Tikkun Synagogue, Berkeley, CA.
Rev. John L Levy, Religious Science, Palm Springs, CA.
Rev. Kirsten M. Linford, Disciples of Christ/United Church of Christ, Westwood Hills Congregational UCC, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Harriet B. Linville, Episcopal, Morro Bay, CA.
Rev. Dr. Robert Lodwick, Presbyterian Church (USA), Pasadena Presbyterian Church, Pasadena, CA.
Rabbi Michael Lotker, Jewish, Temple Ner Ami, Northridge, CA.
Rev. Petra Malleis-Sternberg, United Church of Christ, First Congregational United Church of Christ, San Bernardino, CA.

Rev. Tessie Mandeville, Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, MCC San Francisco, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Dr. Robert Mattheis, Lutheran (ELCA), Our Savior, Lafayette, CA, Lodi, CA.
Rev. Patricia E. McClellan, OMC, Celtic Christian, St. Columba's Celtic Christian Church, Pinole, CA.
Rev. David Elwood McCracken, United Church of Christ, Sonoma, CA.
Rev. Gregory W. McGonigle, Unitarian Universalist, Davis, CA.
Rev. Steven E Meineke, UCC, Solana Beach, CA.
Rabbi Norman Mendel, Jewish, San Luis Obispo, CA.
Rev. Barbara Meyers, Unitarian Universalist, Mission Peak Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Fremont, CA.
Rev. Eleanor Meyers, United Church of Christ, Claremont, CA.
Rev. Ralph Midtlyng, ELCA, All Saints Ev. Lutheran, Granada Hills, CA.
Rev. Rosamonde Miller, Gnostic, Palo Alto, CA.
Rev. John S Millspaugh, Unitarian Universalist, Tapestry, a Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Mission Viejo, CA.
Rev. Clair E Mitchell, United Methodist, Westwood—LA, CA, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Dr. Rick Mitchell, Disciples of Christ, Concord, CA.
Rev. Douglas J. Monroe, United Methodist, 1st UMC of Napa, Napa, CA.
Rev. Richard O. Moore, United Church of Christ, Claremont, CA.
Rev. Ronald S. Moore, Lutheran, San Leandro, CA.
Rev. Amy Zucker Morgenstern, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, Palo Alto, CA.
Rev. Keith Mozingo, Metropolitan Community Churches, Metropolitan Community Church Los Angeles, West Hollywood, CA.
Rev. Paul Mullins, ELCA, Grace, San Francisco, CA.
Rabbi Leonard Z Muroff, Jewish, Temple Beth Zion-Sinai, Agoura Hills, CA.
Rabbi Tracy Nathan, Jewish, Congregation Beth Sholom, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Arlene K. Nehring, United Church of Christ, Eden United Church of Christ, Hayward, CA.
Rev. Penny Nixon, Metropolitan Community Churches, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Julia H. Older, Unitarian Universalist, UUFRC, Redwood City, CA.
Rev. Kathleen France O'Leary, United Methodist, Arcata UMC, McKinleyville, CA.
Rev. G. Kathleen Owens, Unitarian Universalist, Pasadena, CA.
Rev. Susan Parsley, Christian, Disciples of Christ, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Larry Patten, United Methodist, Wesley United Methodist, Fresno, CA.
Rev. Fhyre Phoenix, Universal Life Church, Arcata, CA.
Rev. Giovanna Piazza, Ecumenical Catholic, Sophia Spirit, Santa Ana, CA.
Rev. Gayle Pickrell, United Methodist, Christ Church UMC, Santa Rosa, CA.
Rev. Fred Rabidoux, Unitarian Universalist, San Francisco, CA.
Rabbi Sanford Ragins, Jewish, Leo Baeck Temple, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Unitarian Universalist, Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry, CA, Sacramento, CA.
Rev. Chris Rankin-Williams, Episcopal, Ross, CA.
Rev. Dr. George Regas, Episcopal, All Saints Church, Pasadena, CA, Pasadena, CA.
Fr. John B. Reid, Eastern Orthodox, St. Michael's Church, West Covina, CA.
Rev. Holly Reinhart-Marean, United Methodist, Sierra Madre United Methodist Church, Sierra Madre, CA.
Rev. Thomas Reinhart-Marean, United Methodist, Sierra Madre UMC, Sierra Madre, CA.
Rev. Dr. Mark Richardson, United Methodist, Trinity UMC, Los Osos California, Los Osos, CA.
Rabbi Dorothy Richman, Jewish, Berkeley, CA.
Mrs. Maria Riter Wilson, The Contemporary Catholic Church, San Dimas, CA.
Rev. Philip H. Robb, Episcopal, St. John's, San Bernardino, Grand Terrace, CA.
Br. Stuart G. Robertson, Presbyterian Church (USA), Grace Sacramento, Carmichael, CA.
Rev. Dr. Wayne Bradley Robinson, United Church of Christ, Pioneer UCC, Antelope, CA.
Rabbi Sanford Rosen, Jewish, Peninsula Temple Beth El, Fullerton, CA.
Rabbi John Rosove, Judaism, Temple Israel of Hollywood, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Kathleen D. Ross Bradford, Episcopal, St. Alban's, Antioch, CA.
Rev. Carol S. Rudisill, Unitarian Universalist, Sierra Madre, CA.
Rev. Dr. Victoria Rue, Roman Catholic, Watsonville, CA.
Rev. Diane B. Russell, Religious Science, Bonita, Chula Vista, CA.
Rev. Susan L. Russell, Episcopal, All Saints Church, Pasadena, Pasadena, CA.
Rev. Kenneth Ryan-King, Episcopalian, San Jorge, Oakland, CA.
Rev. Franklin D. Sablan, United Methodist, Wilshire UMC, Los Angeles, CA.
Rabbi Joseph Baruch Sacks, Conservative Judaism, Congregation Beth Shalom of Corona, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Katherine Salinaro, Episcopal, Hercules, CA.
Rev. Blythe Sawyer, UCC, UCC Petaluma, Petaluma, CA.
Rev. Maxine S. Schiltz, Religious Science, Lancaster, CA.
Rev. David F. Schlicher, UCC, College Community Congregational Church UCC, Fresno, CA.
Rev. Rick Schlosser, United Methodist, Clearlake Oaks Community UMC, Sacramento, CA.
Rev. Kathryn M. Schreiber, UCC, United Church of Hayward, UCC, Hayward, CA.
Rev. Craig Scott, Unitarian Universalist, Berkeley, CA.
Rabbi Judith A. Seid, Jewish, Tri-Valley Cultural Jews-CSJO, Pleasanton, CA.
Rabbi Richard Shapiro, Jewish-Reform, Temple Sinai, Rancho Mirage, CA.
Rev. Andy Shelton, Community of Christ, Novato, CA.
Rabbi John M. Sherwood, Jewish, Temple Beth Torah, Oxnard, CA.
Rev. John L. Shriver, Presbyterian, Walnut Creek, CA.
Rev. Linda Siddall, Religious Science, San Mateo, CA.
Rev. Grace H. Simons, Unitarian Universalist, UU Fellowship of Stanislaus County, Modesto, CA.
Fr. Duane Lynn Sisson, Episcopalian, St. Giles, Oakland, CA.
Rev. David A. Smiley, Disciples of Christ, San Luis Obispo, CA.
Rev. Channing Smith, Episcopal, Transfiguration Episcopal Church, Belmont, CA.
Fr. Richard L. Smith, Ph.D., Episcopal, St. John the Evangelist, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Stanley A. Smith, Protestant, Carmel, CA.
Rev. Dr. Ronald Sparks, United Church of Christ, Community Church, California City, CA.
The Rev. Jeffrey Spencer, United Church of Christ, Niles Congregational UCC, Fremont, CA.
Rev. Terry C. Springstead, Mar Thoma Orthodox Catholic Church, Ridgecrest, CA.
Rev. Betty R. Stapleford, Unitarian Universalist, Conejo Valley UU Fellowship, Thousand Oaks, CA.
Rabbi David E. S. Stein, Jewish, Redondo Beach, CA.
Rabbi Stephen Julius Stein, Jewish, Wilshire Boulevd Temple, Los Angeles, CA.
Rabbi Gershon Steinberg-Caudill, Jewish, Ohr Shekinah Havurah, El Cerrito, CA.
Rabbi Ronald Stern, Jewish, Stephen S. Wise Temple, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Robert Stewart, Presbyterian (USA), San Francisco, CA.
The Rev. B.J. Stiles, United Methodist, Cal-Nev UMC Conference, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. Jerald Stinson, United Church of Christ, First Congregational Church of Long Beach, CA, Long Beach, CA.
Rev. Janine C. Stock, Independent Catholic, All Saints Parish, Carlsbad, CA.
Rev. Roger D. Straw, United Church of Christ, Benicia, CA.
Rev. Susan M. Strouse, Lutheran, First United Lutheran, Berkeley, CA.
Rev. Rexford J. Styzens, Unitarian Universalist, Long Beach, CA.
Rev. Gerald V. Summers, United Methodist, Chico, CA.
Rev. Neil A. Tadken, Episcopal, St. James' Church, L.A., West Hollywood, CA.
Msr. Suzanne Tavernetti, Episcopal, King City, CA.
Rev. Richard E. Taylor, Ph.D., American Baptist, Eureka, CA.
Rev. Wendy J. Taylor, United Church of Christ, San Mateo, CA.
Rev. Neil G. Thomas, Metropolitan Community Churches, Metropolitan Community Church Los Angeles, West Hollywood, CA.
Rev. Janelle L. Tibbetts, PCUSA, Burbank, CA.
Rev. Harold A. Tillinghast, United Methodist, Eureka, CA.
Rev. Dr. Lynn Ungat, Unitarian Universalist, Church of the Larger Fellowship, Castro Valley, CA.
Rev. Valerie A. Valle, Ph.D., Episcopalian, St. Alban's, Brentwood, Brentwood, CA.
Rev. Clyde Vaughn, United Methodist, Aptos, California, Aptos, CA.
Rev. Felix C. Villanueva, UCC, UCC La Mesa, La Mesa, CA.
Rev. Joseph Walters, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), First Christian Church, Fremont, CA.
Rev. Mary Walton, United Methodist Church, Long Beach, CA.
Rabbi Martin Weiner, Reform Judaism, Sherith Israel, San Francisco, CA.
Rev. S. Kay Wellington, UCC, Benicia Community, Concord, CA.
Rev. Faith Whitmore, United Methodist, St. Mark's UMC, Sacramento, CA.
Rev. Bets Wienecke, Unitarian Universalist, Carpinteria, CA.
Rev. Ned Wight, Unitarian Universalist, La Mesa, CA.
Rev. Karen L. Wiklund, Universal Life Church, Lompoc, CA.
Rev. Warren R. Wilcox, United Church of Christ, Grover Beach, CA.
Rev. Lee E. Williamson, United Methodist, California-Nevada Conference, Hayward, CA.
Rev. Dr. Kimberly Willis, United-Methodist, Bakersfield, CA.
Rev. Paul D. Wolkovits, Roman Catholic, Los Angeles, CA.
Rev. Mark Zangrando, Catholic, Jesuit, West Hollywood, CA.
Rev. Oberon Zell, Church of All Worlds, Cotati, CA.
Rev. David Zollars, Presbyterian, Comm. Pres. Pittsburg, Pittsburg, CA.
Rabbi Laurie Coskey, Reform Judaism, San Diego, CA.
Pastor Janice Adams, Presbyterian, Calvary Presbyterian, Bayfield, CO.
Rev. George C. Anastos, United Church of Christ, First Plymouth Congregational Church, Englewood, CO.

Rev. Richard Baer, Buddhist, The Open Circle, Littleton, CO.

Rabbi Eliot Baskin, Jewish, Har Shalom, Greenwood Village, CO.

Rev. Bonnie L. Benda, United Methodist, Cameron, Denver, CO.

Rev. Sharon A. Benton, Christian, Plymouth Congregational Church, Fort Collins, CO.

Rev. John P. Blinn, United Methodist, Pueblo, CO.

Rev. Nelson Bock, Lutheran (ELCA), Our Savior's Lutheran, Denver, Denver CO.

Rev. Rebecca Booher, Interfaith/Unitarian Universalist, UU Church of Pueblo, Pueblo, CO.

Rabbi Stephen Booth-Nadav, Reconstructionist/Jewish, Bnai Havurah:CJRF, Denver, CO.

Rev. Betty J. Bradford, United Methodist, Denver, CO.

Rev. Patrick Bruns, United Methodist, Brentwood United Methodist Church, Denver, CO.

Rev. Russell V. Butler, United Methodist, Arvada United Methodist, Arvada, CO.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I also will submit into the RECORD at this point some groups who want to go on the record as being in support of this.

COALITIONS FOR AMERICA,
Washington, DC, July 17, 2006.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE, I want you to know that I am in fu11 support of your efforts and appreciate your leadership role in helping to defend traditional marriage by sponsoring House Joint Resolution 88, a constitutional amendment to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

As a conservative, amending the Constitution is not something I or others should take lightly, but with the continuous assault from the left on traditional marriage ''day in and day out'' it is an issue that must be addressed, I believe, by amending the Constitution.

Sincerely,

PAUL M. WEYRICH,
National Chairman.

POSITION STATEMENT OF FOCUS ON THE FAMILY ON THE MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT, H.J. RES. 88

Marriage is a sacred, legal, and social union ordained by God to be a lifelong exclusive relationship between one man and one woman. Focus on the Family holds this institution in the highest esteem, and strongly opposes any legal sanction of marriage counterfeits, such as the legalization of same-sex ''marriage.'' History, nature, social science, anthropology, religion, and theology all coalesce in vigorous support of traditional marriage as it has always been understood: a lifelong union of male and female for the purpose of creating stable families.

The Marriage Protection Amendment is necessary to protect the institution of marriage. To date, three courts have overturned state marriage protection amendments and in one state—Massachusetts—judicial fiat has forced the state to issue same-sex ''marriage'' licenses. Currently, ten states face challenges to their marriage protection laws. Just one such lawsuit needs to reach the Supreme Court before marriage is redefined for all Americans.

A plethora of federal and state law including tax law, employment law, social security, wills and estates, depend on a foundational definition of marriage for proper application. Without a national definition of marriage upheld in the Constitution, consistent administration of law will soon be impossible.

Due to the foundational importance of marriage in American society it must be defined nationally. The only question is, Who will define marriage? Will it be tyrannical judges acting through the courts to write a radical new definition of marriage or the American people, acting through their elected legislators to pass a Marriage Protection Amendment? We believe the people should decide.

Focus on the Family calls on all Members of Congress to cosponsor and vote in support of the Marriage Protection Amendment, H.J. Res. 88.

CENTER FOR RECLAIMING AMERICA FOR CHRIST,
Fort Lauderdale, FL, July 14, 2006.

Hon. MARILYN MUSGRAVE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MRS. MUSGRAVE: We firmly believe that marriage is more than a private emotional relationship. It is for the common good of society that marriage remains exclusively the union of a man and a woman.

We agree that the Constitutional amendment process is a fair and democratic way of putting this important question back in the hands of the American people rather than in the hands of a number of unelected judges, whose bias leads them to redefine marriage contrary to its basic meaning and structure.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. GARY L. CASS,
Executive Director,
Center for Reclaiming America.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS,
Chattanooga, TN, July 14, 2006.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN: Multiple studies have shown that children are healthier when they have both a mom and a dad married to each other. Risks such as physical abuse, verbal abuse, and poverty decrease when children live in a family with a mother and a father. To intentionally increase a child's risk of abuse by depriving him/her of a natural family structure is unconscionable. A federal marriage amendment will protect this family structure, and thereby protect the institution that is foundational to our strong society.

Despite the overwhelming support of Americans for the protection of marriage, a few judges are taking liberties to change the definition of marriage through the courts. As President Bush said, ''After more than two centuries of American Jurisprudence, and millennia of human experience, a few judges and local authorities are presuming to change the most fundamental institution of civilization.'' The Founders did not intend for the Judiciary to overrule the will of the people by judicial fiat, especially when that will extends to preserving a sacred and essential institution of our society.

The American Association of Christian Schools urges you to join your colleagues in supporting and voting for a Federal Constitutional Amendment that protects marriage.

Yours for the children,

KEITH WIEBE,
President.

AMERICAN VALUES,
Arlington, VA.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MUSGRAVE: Thank you for your leadership in defense of traditional marriage and for sponsoring House Joint Resolution 88, a constitutional amendment to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. While conservatives believe amending the Constitution should never be taken lightly, the Constitution's framers created an amendment process for a reason. Sometimes we must address issues that affect us all, and marriage is just such an issue.

I was encouraged to learn recently that New York's highest court upheld the legislature's right to pass laws protecting marriage, based largely on ''. . . the undisputed assumption that marriage is important to the welfare of children.'' As the court stated, ''. . . The Legislature could rationally believe that it is better, other things being equal, for children to grow up with both a mother and a father. Intuition and experience suggest that a child benefits from having before his or her eyes, every day, living models of what both a man and woman are like.''

Today, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals re-instated Nebraska's popularly-enacted marriage protection amendment based on the recognition that marriage is ''rationally related to legitimate state interests.'' While this decision is good news, it also means that this case might be headed to the United States Supreme Court, which raises the stakes in the upcoming vote on House Joint Resolution 88.

I am hopeful that the House of Representatives will follow the lead of the American people and respond decisively to the threat posed by judicial activists to redefine traditional marriage. I look forward to working with you in the future on this important issue.

Sincerely,

GARY L. BAUER.

THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION,
Nashville, TN, July 14, 2006.

Hon. MARILYN MUSGRAVE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN MUSGRAVE: Recently Alabama, by the approval of 81 percent of the people, became the 20th state to affirm a state constitutional amendment on marriage. A total of 45 states have now passed amendments or laws prohibiting same-sex marriage. Clearly, Americans do not want to see this most basic institution open to any arrangement other than that of one man and one woman.

Unfortunately, recent court decisions have demonstrated that state constitutional amendments can be struck down at the whim of an overreaching judge. Last year, a federal judge struck down Nebraska's state marriage amendment—despite its passage by over 70 percent of voters in 2000—and more recently, a Georgia court deemed the state's marriage amendment unconstitutional—in the wake of 76 percent of voters favoring the amendment in 2004. Fortunately, the Georgia ruling has been overturned, but that case still serves as a reminder that an amendment to the U.S. Constitution is the only sure means to safeguard marriage from radical judges.

Respectfully,

RICHARD D. LAND,
President.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON).

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the marriage protection amendment, and I want to thank Congresswoman MUSGRAVE for her bravery and leadership on this critical issue.

Marriage is an honored institution in this country, and voters have consistently voiced their support for protecting traditional marriage. Many

State legislatures have already taken action and laws have been passed to establish marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Unfortunately, we have seen activist courts taking the legislative power away from elected officials and reversing important laws and, in particular, marriage protections. Recent court decisions are threatening traditional marriage, and I might add that there are groups in this country who have made that their agenda. They want to redefine the institution of marriage in the United States, and they do not want to do it through the political process, but they want to do it through the courts; and that is why we are here today having this debate.

Our goal is to preserve the most basic fundamental unit of our society, of every society on the planet, the family. It has been consistently proven that children benefit the most from being raised in a home with a father and a mother present. Some people argue that traditional marriages and families are failing anyway and they are not worth protecting. I say if children are benefiting from traditional families, we always must fight. It is always worth protecting.

This is why I stand today, urging my colleagues to support this important amendment. This issue will not go away, and that is about protecting the clergy so that they can marry men and women and not be forced by courts to do something other than what they want to do.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of points made in this debate today with doubtful validity. We are told we should pass this amendment to protect marriage. But against what threat? If Henry and Steve want to get married, maybe that is a good idea, maybe it is a bad idea, but it does not threaten the marriage of anyone else, of any man or woman who wants to get married. It does not affect them in any way. Divorce is a threat. Some of our other threats are threats, but gay marriage is not a threat to a straight marriage.

We are told we have to protect children, but children are already in the custody of straight people, of gay people, of gay couples, of individuals. If we want to protect children, we should give a legal basis to the partnership of the two people who have custody of them. Now, we are not saying that it might not be preferable to have a traditional custody arrangement, maybe it is, but this does not affect that in any way.

Nor do we say because we want to protect children that we prohibit elderly couples from getting married or sterile couples from getting married because procreation is the purpose of marriage. So this is a red herring.

We had a whole religious discussion. The fact is churches can define marriage in their point of view, any way they want. We are not telling a church you must consider this couple married from a religious point of view. We are not telling the church how to define the sacrament. We are talking about civil marriage, and churches can do what they want and regard as married whom they want, but we are talking about what the government recognizes.

We are also told that this is to protect marriage, but the amendment talks about not only marriage by, but the incidents thereof, to clearly prohibit specific rights that a State may choose to give to a gay couple, the right of inheritance, a right of visitation when one is sick in the hospital. Why should we tell the States they cannot do that at their wisdom?

We are told always by the other side of the aisle that we should protect the rights of States, but as I said a few moments ago, family law, the marriage law, divorce law, visitation law, child custody law have always been a matter for the States. Why are we preempting those State laws?

We are told we are preempting unelected judges, that that amendment is an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, that it would preempt not just judges elected or appointed. It would preempt the State legislative action; it would preempt action by the people in a referendum. That is not democratic, with a small D.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a political stunt. It is a political stunt at the expense of a minority, of an unpopular minority. That is all it is. We know it is not going to pass. We know the Senate already rejected it. So this is just a political stunt.

I appeal to my colleagues, vote ''no'' on this amendment. Leave family law where it always has been, with the State, and do not desecrate our Constitution, do not desecrate our most sacred document, our civil religion, by inserting it into an amendment to deny a basic right to an unpopular group just because we want to make a political point at the expense of that unpopular group in an election year.

Make no mistake, that is what this amendment is. That is all it is. It does not protect marriage. It does not protect children. It just makes a political point at the expense of an unpopular group, and we should not desecrate our Constitution by so doing.

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to close and I just want to split the time between Mr. MURPHY and Mrs. MUSGRAVE.

I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY).

Mr. MURPHY. I thank the Speaker and the Members on this as I speak in favor of this amendment.

As a person who has spent my career as a child psychologist and have dealt with many children who have struggled with many problems in families, I have seen families ripped apart by so many things that sometimes law has tried to deal with. Instead, I think over the years we have cut the strength of marriage and relationships by the law and weakened the institution. We have tried to deal with relationships with no-fault divorce, with child custody, with so many other avenues; and it has not helped.

What I do say is, yes, children may be resilient and they have been able to deal with all sorts of difficulties they have faced, but the bottom line is this: I believe very strongly children need a mother and a father in the home. They need strong relationships with men and women both, and they are the ones that I believe are part of what is preserved in this amendment and why I believe we need to support this, if anything, for the sake of those children who need this kind of support in their lifetime.

□ 1330

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman from Colorado is recognized for 1½ minutes.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say to Mr. NADLER, your statements about hospital visits and those things, that was a misstatement. That is not what this amendment does. There are State legislatures that have the authority to handle all of the benefits that you have talked about, and that is what the amendment clearly states.

I would just like to say, we can look at places like the Netherlands, where since 1997 they have had registered partnership, and gay marriage since 2001. In effect, that is probably the best place to look at what gay marriage has done. The out-of-wedlock births have escalated. The divorce rate is escalating. In fact, many people in Scandinavia don't think that marriage is even relevant today.

I would say today if marriage can mean anything, eventually marriage will mean nothing.

Within the institution of marriage, society offers special support and encouragement to the men and women who together make children. Because marriage is deeply implicated in the interest of children, it is obviously a matter of public concern. Children depend on society to create institutions to keep them from chaos. That is why we have the obligation to give special support and encouragement to an institution that is necessary to the well-being of children.

I urge my colleagues to support public policy that strengthens marriage and vote in favor of this amendment.

Marriage is for Children:

1a) In setting up the institution of marriage, society offers special support and encouragement to the men and women who together make children. Because marriage is deeply implicated in the interests of children, it is a matter of public concern. Children are helpless. They depend upon adults. Over and above their parents, children depend upon society to create institutions that keep them from chaos. Children cannot articulate their needs. Children cannot vote. Yet children are society.

They are us, and they are our future. That is why society has the right to give special support and encouragement to an institution that is necessary to the well being of children—even if that means special benefits for some, and not for others. Single people are denied the benefits of married couples, for example. But this is permitted because married parenthood is essential to society. The law has always permitted the state to give special support to critical institutions, if those institutions serve a compelling interest of society. Marriage is exactly such an institution. Marriage is designed to maximize the chances that each child will be provided with a mother and a father, in a stable family setting, during the years when children are too young to fend for themselves. To redefine marriage in such a way as to remove its essential connection to parenthood is to take away its very purpose.

(1b) Only a man and a woman have the power between them to create children. Marriage as an institution helps to turn the love of a man and a woman into an instrument for the nurture and protection of children. If we redefine fathers, mothers, and parenthood out of marriage, then this precious institution will be lost.

The European Experience With Gay Marriage:

Can it be a coincidence that Scandinavia, the region with the highest out-of-wedlock birthrates in the world, was the very first place to recognize same-sex unions? Marriage was already in serious decline in Sweden and Norway when same-sex partnerships arrived, and since that time marital decline in those countries has advanced still further. But the clearest example of the effect of same-sex marriage is the Netherlands, where they have had registered partnerships since 1997 and full gay marriage since 2001. In the Netherlands, out-of-wedlock birthrates were low until the arrival of registered partnerships and gay marriage. But since the advent of registered partnerships and same-sex marriage, the out-of-wedlock birthrate has risen faster and longer in the Netherlands than in any other west European country.

(1a) What is marriage? Marriage is society's way of supporting the men and women who together make children. Children can't fend for themselves. That's why the public has always taken an interest in marriage. By supporting the institution of marriage, the state encourages the rearing of children under the secure care of a mother and father. But what would happen if we said marriage doesn't have anything to do with mothers, fathers, and children? What would happen if we said marriage is really just about a couple of adults who love each other—whether they're men and women or not?

Well, just look at Scandinavia and Holland. Over in Scandinavia they've had various forms of same-sex partnership nearly two decades. And they've had gay marriage in Holland for several years. But marriage in Scandinavia is dying, and marriage in Holland is growing progressively weaker every year. A majority of children in Sweden and Norway are now born out-of-wedlock. In some parts of Norway, as many as eighty percent of first-born children and two-thirds of subsequent children are now born out-of-wedlock. True, much of that decline took place even before same-sex partnerships came into effect. But in both Sweden and Norway, marriage continued to decline following the introduction of same-sex partnerships. Can it be a coincidence that the region of the world where marriage has traditionally been weakest was the first place to experiment with something like same-sex marriage?

The negative effects of gay marriage on marriage are even clearer in the Netherlands. Prior to the introduction of registered partnerships and later gay marriage, Holland was known for having one of the lowest out-of-wedlock birthrates in Northern Europe. Yet out-of-wedlock birthrates have been rising at an unusually rapid rate in the Netherlands ever since registered partnerships, and then formal gay marriage, were established.

In the last decade, no other West European country has seen its out-of-wedlock birthrate rise as fast as Holland's. And there were no other major legal or social changes during the last decade that might explain Holland's rising out-of-wedlock birthrate in some other way. So it looks very likely that registered partnerships and same-sex marriage have helped to hasten the unusually rapid decline of marriage in the Netherlands.

Gay marriage has helped send a message to parents in Scandinavia and Holland that being married doesn't have much of anything to do with being a parent. Nowadays, a lot of parents in Scandinavia and Holland put off getting married until after they've had a child or two, if they don't break up first—which many do. Increasingly, parents in these countries don't get married at all anymore. If marriage is disappearing in the parts of the world that have had something like gay marriage longer than anywhere else, I don't want to take a chance on gay marriage here.

1b) Marriage is not meant solely, or even mainly, for husbands and wives. Marriage exists as a public institution because children need mothers and fathers. Once marriage is treated as a mere celebration of the love of two adults, there is no reason for it to necessarily happen before children are born instead of after. And if marriage could just as well happen after children are born, it doesn't really need to happen at all. European parents have increasingly stopped marrying because they no longer think of marriage as an institution meant to bind children to mothers and fathers. Gay marriage helps Europeans to see it that way, making them consider marriage nothing more than the expression of mutual affection between two adults. But this view translates into marrying long after children are born—if parents don't break up first. It means rising rates of family dissolution. That's what's happening in Europe. Do we want it to happen in America? That the family is the bedrock of society is more than just a cliche. In Scandinavia, where they've had de facto gay marriage for some time, marriage is dying, and a huge welfare state has taken over for parents. If the family goes here in America, then we will either have the social chaos of more crime and fatherless kids, or we will have to vastly expand our welfare state. So this issue touches on the deepest problems of governance. America's system of limited government works because the family does what the state does not. Weaken the family, and government is bound to expand to take its place. That is exactly what's happened in Scandinavia.

Responding to Critics of the Scandinavia/Holland argument:

(1) I know some folks have said that same-sex partnerships haven't had any bad effects on marriage in Europe, but I don't find their arguments convincing.

(a) For one thing, some of these folks actually deny that Europe's high out-of-wedlock birthrates are a problem at all. That's just not true. In Europe, cohabiting parents break up at two-to-three times the rate of married parents. That level of family instability is very bad for children. So the European experience actually proves that it's better when parents get married.

(b) Some folks say that marriage was in trouble in Scandinavia even before same-sex partnerships came along. Well, that's true, although in most parts of Scandinavia marriage continued to decline after same-sex partnerships came along. We all know that marriage has been in trouble for some time in America, and in many other countries, for a wide variety of reasons. But if you want to see a clear case where marriage was relatively strong, and only went into serious decline after the introduction of same-sex partnerships, just look at Holland. (See 1a in the previous section for more on Holland.)

(c) Some folks claim that the Dutch example isn't a problem because out-of-wedlock birthrates have been rising almost as rapidly in Eastern Europe as in Holland. But the decline of marriage in Eastern Europe is rooted in the economic chaos that followed the collapse of communism. The amazing thing is that a prosperous Western European country like The Netherlands is experiencing the same sort of marital decline we're seeing in countries recovering from the collapse of their entire social system.

(d) Some folks say that out-of-wedlock birthrates in Sweden haven't gone up all that much since registered partnerships came along in 1994. But they're not counting from 1987, when Sweden introduced the very first same-sex partnerships in the world. Just because these first same-sex partnerships didn't include all the rights of marriage doesn't mean that they weren't a huge legal and symbolic step. Amazingly, in 1987, at the very same time that Sweden introduced the first same-sex partnerships in the world, Sweden also granted just about all the rights of marriage to unmarried heterosexual couples. So from 1987 on, Sweden's parliament sent out a powerful message that married parenthood isn't important. Same-sex partnerships were part of that message from the start.

(e) Some folks say that marriage in Denmark hasn't suffered since they adopted same-sex partnerships in 1989. Well, it's true that the Danish out-of-wedlock birthrate hasn't risen since they adopted same-sex partnerships, like it has in Sweden, Norway, and Holland. But that's a bit misleading. Actually, the rate of unmarried parenthood has increased among young people in Denmark, who are adopting the same practice of cohabiting parenthood favored in other Scandinavian countries. But the increased rate of unmarried parenthood among young Danes has been temporarily offset by marriages among older Danes.

You see, there are virtually no housewives left in Denmark. The need to support the huge Danish welfare state forces nearly all Danish women to work. And it was only in the late 1980's and 1990's that Denmark created a parental leave policy and other changes that allowed large numbers of women to take time off of work to become mothers. That policy

change unleashed huge pent-up demand among Danish women to have children, and that led to a temporary increase in the marriage rate among older Danes. But all that time, younger Danes have been taking up the practice of unmarried parenthood that is already so popular in the rest of Scandinavia.

The Slippery Slope to Polygamy, Polyamory (Group Marriage) and Parental Cohabitation:

(1) Once we say that same-sex couples can marry, it's going to be impossible to deny that right to polygamists and believers in group marriage. After all, gay marriage is being advocated on grounds of relationship equality. So if all relationships are equal, why is group marriage forbidden? And don't think it can't happen here. We already know that there are thousands of practicing polygamists in some Western states. But did you also know that there are groups of ''polyamorists'' all over the country? Just go to the Internet and run a google search on the word ''polyamory.'' The polyamorists have already had one court case trying to gain recognition for a marriage of a woman and two men. They're just waiting for gay marriage to pass to begin agitating for legalized group marriage. And after granting gay marriage on equal protection grounds, how is a court going to deny them? There are plenty of polyamorists out there, but the problem goes further than that. We now have an advocacy group called the ''Alternatives to Marriage Project'' which supports polyamory and other innovations like parental cohabitation. The Alternatives to Marriage Project is frequently quoted in the mainstream media. And believe it or not, the most powerful faction of family law scholars in our law schools favors legal recognition of both polyamory and parental cohabitation. There are even law review articles out now advocating both. And the influential American Law Institute has even come out with proposals which would grant nearly equal legal recognition to cohabiting and married parents. If we allow marriage to be radically redefined now, we will not be able to stop these further changes.

(2) Now I know that some folks scoff at the claim that same-sex marriage could lead to polygamy. But just look at what's happened around the world in the past year or so. In Sweden, which passed the first same-sex partnership plan in the world, we've had a serious proposals floated by parties on the left to abolish marriage and legalize multi-partner unions. In the Netherlands, the first country in the world to have full and formal same-sex marriage, a man and two bisexual women signed a triple cohabitation contract. When a conservative political party asked the Dutch government to withdraw recognition from that contract, the government refused. In fact, the Dutch Justice Minister said it was actually a good thing that the law was beginning to provide support for multi-partner relationships. In Canada, two out of four reports commissioned by the last government recommended the decriminalization and regulation of polygamy. True, the revelation of those reports helped Canada's Conservative Party win the last election. But the fact remains that many of Canada's legal elites want to see the abolition of traditional marriage and official recognition for multi-partner unions.

And of course, in America we've got ''Big Love,'' a popular television show on HBO about polygamy. Even a year ago, no-one would have believed it if someone had said we'd soon have a television show with polygamists as heroes. But it's happened. And next week the BRAVO Channel is going to run a sympathetic documentary about a relationship between a woman and two bisexual men. It's called ''Three of Hearts,'' and it's already played in movie theaters across the country.

The truth is, this is only the beginning. Advocates for multi-partner unions are out there, but many of them are waiting for same-sex marriage to be legalized before they make their move to gain public acceptance. Newsweek has already said that ''polygamy activists are emerging in the wake of the gay marriage movement.'' Well, just wait till gay marriage is actually legalized. If that happens, you can bet we'll see plenty more movies and television shows along the lines of ''Big Love'' and ''Three of Hearts.'' The people on the so-called ''cutting edge'' of culture in Europe and Canada have already made it clear that multi-partner unions are their next crusade, and it's happening in America even as we speak. The only way to put a stop to it is to define marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

The Threat to Religious Freedom:

(1) It's becoming increasingly apparent that gay marriage poses a significant threat to religious liberty. Scholars on both the left and right agree that same-sex marriage has raised the specter of a massive and protracted battle over religious freedom. In states that adopt same-sex marriage, religious liberty is clearly going to lose. Gay marriage proponents argue that sexual orientation is like race, and that opponents of same-sex marriage are therefore like bigots who oppose interracial marriage. Once same-sex marriage becomes law, that understanding is likely to be controlling. Legal same-sex marriage will be taken by courts as proof that a ''public policy'' in support of same-sex marriage exists.

So in states with same-sex marriage, religiously affiliated schools, adoption agencies, psychological clinics, social workers, marital counselors, etc. will be forced to choose between going out of business and violating their own deeply held beliefs. If a religious social service agency refuses to offer counseling designed to preserve the marriage of a same-sex couple, it could lose its tax-exempt status. Religious schools would either have to tolerate conduct they believed to be sinful, or face a cut-off of federal funds. It's already happening, as we've seen with the recent withdrawal of Boston's Catholic Charities from the adoption business.

Free speech could also be under threat, as sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace principles are used by nervous corporate lawyers to draw speech prohibitions on the marriage issue. Fear of litigation will breed self-censorship. One expert predicts ''a concerted effort to take same-sex marriage from a negative right to be free of state interference to a positive entitlement to assistance by others.''

Some folks say the answer to this problem is special exemptions from the law for religious conscience. But conscience exemptions would be very difficult to enact. And in Europe, which has tried this in places, conscience exemptions are breaking down and failing to provide protection for the traditionally religious.

The lesson in all this is clear. There's a lot more at stake in the battle over same-sex marriage than the marriage issue itself, important as that is. The very ability of religiously affiliated organizations to exist and operate is under threat.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment, H.J. Res. 88.

Just a few yards down the hall from where we are debating this discriminatory constitutional amendment today, in the Rotunda of this great Capitol, stands a bust of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Every time I walk through the Rotunda, I remember Dr. King's struggle and what his life meant for me and for all Americans. For too long, the inalienable constitutional rights of all Americans were denied to many of our neighbors. As the leader of the civil rights movement, Dr. King helped secure equal rights for all Americans regardless of the color of their skin.

One of the things that Dr. King fought against were the anti-miscegenation laws that existed at some point in 49 states. These laws prohibited interracial marriage and they were still in effect in sixteen states when the Supreme Court ruled them unconstitutional in 1967 because they denied the liberty of American citizens. Legal bans on interracial marriage were defended with all the kinds of arguments used by proponents of bans on same sex marriage: They would say that interracial marriages are contrary to the laws of God or contrary to centuries of social tradition or harmful to the institution of marriage or harmful to children. Would any Member of this body now defend those bans? Those bans were discriminatory and took away the rights of American citizens—in short they were what the Constitution was designed to prohibit. No one longs for anti-miscegenation laws today. We as a nation have learned from our mistakes.

Or have we?

We remember Dr. King for what he stood for, not just for who he was. As he said, ''man is man because he is free to operate within the framework of his destiny. He is free to deliberate, to make decisions, and to choose between alternatives. He is distinguished from animals by his freedom to do evil or to do good and to walk the high road of beauty or tread the low road of ugly degeneracy.''

Today, I ask, will we do evil or will we do good? Will we keep the spirit of the Founding Fathers alive? Will we respect and honor the foundations of our constitutional government or will we chart a new course and, in the name of protecting an institution that is under no threat, shred the very premise of our Constitution.

Our Constitution is the source of our freedom in this great country. For almost 220 years, the Constitution—mankind's greatest invention—has allowed our diverse people to live together, to balance our various interests, and to thrive. It has provided each citizen with broad, basic rights. The inherent wisdom of the Constitution is that it doesn't espouse a single viewpoint or ideology. Rather it protects all individuals as equal under the law.

In more than 200 years, the Constitution has been amended on only 27 occasions. With the exception of Prohibition—which was later repealed—these amendments have affirmed and expanded individual freedoms and rights. Yet, this proposed amendment threatens to lead us in a dangerous new direction. This amendment would restrict freedoms, and codify discrimination into our guiding charter.

We must think deeply about the ramifications of allowing such an amendment to be ratified. It would create a group of second-

class citizens who lack equal rights due to the private, personal choices they and their loved one have made. It would also transfer to the federal government the right to recognize marriages, a power that had previously been retained by the States.

This amendment is not only discriminatory and inhumane, it is also illogical. How does this actually protect marriage? What is it exactly about same sex marriage that is putting heterosexual marriage at risk? Do the proponents of the ban on same sex marriages want to annul all childless marriages or require all newlyweds to promise to have children? Do the proponents of this ban think for a moment that the marriage of loving people of the same sex are the case of America's high divorce rate among heterosexuals. It seems to me that other factors than this are responsible for the high divorce rate.

I certainly agree that the institution of marriage and a cohesive family unit are vital to the health of our communities and the success of our society. Unfortunately, the amendment we are debating today does nothing to strengthen the bonds of matrimony, nor does it strengthen families or enhance our communities. In fact, it divides our communities, and shows contempt to a minority population. Throughout history, we have only moved forward when our society has come together to build a more perfect union, not intentionally divide American against American.

No one should be denied the opportunity to choose his or her life partner. It is a basic human right. It is a deeply personal decision. Attacking gay couples who want to share lifelong obligations and responsibilities undermines the spirit of community that this amendment purports to strengthen.

In 50 years will we build a statue to honor the great advances for our society that this amendment provided, as we do for the life of Dr. King? No. In the long shadow of history, this amendment and the philosophy behind it will be remembered alongside anti-miscegenation laws as offending the spirit of America and our founding principles.

I hope that my colleagues will recognize the tremendous cost this amendment will have for our freedoms and I respectfully urge them to oppose it.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment.

Last Friday, the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the Nebraska constitutional amendment protecting marriage between one man and one woman, and affirming the legal protections and benefits reserved to this fundamental union. The amendment was approved by an overwhelming 70 percent majority in 2000.

Nationwide, 45 states have defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman or expressly prohibited same-sex marriage. Twenty states approved constitutional amendments upholding marriage; six states will vote on an amendment in November; and eight states are considering sending constitutional amendments to voters in 2006 or 2008. The 16 states that approved constitutional amendments since 2004 did so by an average 72 percent voter majority.

Even voters in Massachusetts—the first state to have its supreme court unilaterally declare same-sex marriage as constitutional—may have the opportunity to uphold marriage. The state's high court ruled last week that legislative efforts to put a same-sex marriage ban on the 2008 ballot could move forward. Recent court rulings in New York, Tennessee and Georgia have also upheld marriage rights.

The Federal Marriage Protection Amendment under consideration today would prohibit any governmental entity—whether in the legislative, executive or judicial branch at all levels of government—from altering the definition of marriage. It does not discriminate against homosexuals; it upholds and recognizes the importance of marriage between a man and a woman for the well-being of children and society at large.

Mr. Speaker, the American people want the Marriage Protection Amendment to be approved. Their will is clearly reflected through the overwhelming majorities voting for marriage protection initiatives in the states. We have a responsibility to children and families nationwide to send a clear message today that marriage will be upheld and protected. We also have a sacred duty to future generations to preserve marriage as the fundamental building block of society.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.J. Res. 88 today.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, today we are debating a Constitutional amendment drafted not to protect my marriage or my family—I see no reasonable way to argue it would—but rather to explicitly deny a portion of our society the right to marry and the benefits that accompany that kind of partnership.

I do not advocate the legalization of gay marriage, but our Constitution is simply not the proper place to set this kind of social policy.

I believed back in 1996, when I voted for the Defense of Marriage Act, and I still believe today, the decision about whether to recognize gay marriage should be left to the states.

I can't help but wonder . . . Why are we doing this? What are we so afraid of?

Gay men and women pass through our lives every day. There are wonderful teachers and leaders and role models who happen to be gay and sometimes we don't even know they're gay.

I wouldn't be a Member of Congress today if it weren't for an extraordinary teacher I had in High School 40 years ago. I learned years later he was gay and that he had commuted from Connecticut to Washington, DC, every weekend in part to protect his privacy and his job.

When I went to college, my understanding of gay people was impacted again by my wife's best friend. One day, she told us she too had found the love of her life. We were eager to meet the boyfriend she was so madly in love with, but we soon learned her love was not a he, but a she.

Once we got over our surprise and our ways of thinking about relationships, we were able to sincerely rejoice in the joy they brought each other because we knew what a dear and good person our friend is.

My perception of gay people evolved further during my first campaign for Congress, when I worked with a magnificent young man named Carl Brown.

He became my friend and he gave me another gay face to know. Carl has since passed away, but I remember him as a person of exceptional dignity and grace.

My teacher, my wife's best friend and Carl helped me understand their lives and I think made me a better person in the process.

The Constitution of the United Staets—which established our government, grants us free speech and gives all citizens the right to vote—should not be dishonored by this effort to write indiscrimination.

I am sensitive to some of my colleague's concerns about potential biblical and social implications of legalizing same-size marriage, but I oppose this proposed amendment because I believe the Constitution is not the proper instrument to set—or reject—such policy. That debate should happened in our state legislatures.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, over the years, this Nation has worked hard to take discrimination out of the Constitution, and today, the House is voting to put it back in.

I can recall just a few short years ago that there were laws inscribed in some State constitutions saying that blacks and whites could not marry. We changed that.

Today, we look back on those days, and we laugh. There will come a time when generations yet unborn will look back on this Congress, look back on this debate, and laugh at us. This is not a good day in America. This is a sad day in the House of the people.

This is unbelievable. It is unreal. I thought as a Nation and as a people we had moved so far down the road toward one family, one House, one America. To pass this legislation would be a step backward.

The institution of marriage is not begging this Congress for protection. No one is running through the halls of Congress. No one is running around this building saying protect us.

Whose marriage is threatened? Whose marriage is in danger if two people, in the privacy of their own hearts, decide they want to be committed to each other? Whose marriage is threatened? Whose marriage is in danger if we decide to recognize the dignity, the worth and humanity of all human beings?

The Constitution is a sacred document. It defines who we are as a nation and as a people. Over the years, we have tried to make it more and more inclusive. We cannot turn back. We do not want to go back. We want to go forward. Today it is gay marriage; tomorrow it will be something else.

Forget about the politics; vote your conscience. Vote with your heart, vote with your soul, vote with your gut. Do what is right and defeat this amendment.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to House Joint Resolution 88, the so-called Marriage Protection Amendment, which proposes an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ban same-sex couples from getting married or receiving any of the rights of marriage.

The right-wing political machine is churning out divisive legislation at a record pace as we get close to the election, but this is a particular low point. We can all have a good laugh at the pandering Republican majority when they claim that banning flag burning will make us more patriotic or that school prayer will prevent teenage pregnancy, but this proposal would, for the first time ever, target a specific group of Americans in our most sacred document, and permanently ban them from having equal rights under the law.

The proposed amendment not only bans marriage, but any of the ''legal incidents thereof,'' meaning that the proponents think our founding document should keep gay and lesbian couples from filing a joint tax return, inheriting property, or visiting their partner in the

hospital. I vehemently oppose this discrimination.

Oh, and I forgot to mention that this amendment has already failed once in the House and twice in the Senate, so today's vote is all a terrible waste of time. What we should be doing is passing legislation to address real problems in America today. Rather than insult a group of people as deserving of protection under law as any other, Congress should work to reduce domestic violence, provide high quality childcare to all families, and make the minimum wage a living wage. These actions would actually prevent divorce in America and strengthen our families.

Citizens of the United States are guaranteed equal treatment under the law, even if voters in red states don't like them. I urge my colleagues to vote against this nonsense.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88, the so called Federal Marriage Amendment. This bill would turn over 200 years of State jurisprudence on its head, attempting to Federalize marriage.

This resolution is another attempt to mandate one definition of marriage upon the States. I ask my colleagues if we take away this right from the States, what's next? Where does it stop? Take away local decisions for education or child custody issues. Between the consideration of this bill and the court stripping bills that we will take up this week, it leads me to believe, Mr. Speaker, this is just another cynical political ploy by the majority during an election year.

Like Vice President CHENEY and former Representative Bob Barr, I believe the voters of each State should decide for themselves who can and cannot marry. It has always been a State function. It should remain so. To take away that right of the State to decide this issue, we endanger basic principles of the Federal system in which we live. As our Constitution so eloquently states in the Tenth Amendment of our Federal Constitution, ''The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.''

Mr. Speaker, amendment of our Constitution has happened only 17 times since the Bill of Rights was passed. Some of those amendments do not look so good today. Many of those not adopted now look worse. We should not lightly tamper with the perfection, beauty and majesty of our great Constitution.

There have been no Committee hearings, no time to look at different amendment proposals, and no opportunity to have the important deliberations that should take place when amending the Constitution. We have heard nothing from our concerned citizens and from our Constitutional scholars.

The issue before us today is not whether you are for or against gay marriage. It is whether or not we should Federalize marriage and take away the right of the States to define marriage.

Now Mr. Speaker, I supported the Defense of Marriage Act and continue to do so. At this point, the Defense of Marriage Act remains the law of the land. It works. Nothing yet threatens this law. Nothing more needs to be done on this matter.

Those proposing this amendment rely on hypothetical dangers to try and push through a dramatic, but mischievous change to our Constitution. I am opposed to taking away the right of each State to have its citizenry decide how to define marriage. It seems to me too many people are meddling in this matter for political reasons. Let the States continue to decide sound public policy on this subject.

We must never rush to amend our Constitution. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this bill and ask for my colleagues to vote against this iniquitous, politically inspired, and destructive legislation.

The Constitution is not a laundry list to be amended on whim or caprice. It is a great, noble and living document, not to be trivialized by amendments which are unnecessary. This amendment is for useless political purposes and should be defeated as an affront to our great and majestic Constitution.

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as a proud husband and father, I value family above all else and strongly support the traditional family: the union of a man and a woman. This union is the cornerstone of our society, and plays a vital and unique role in our children's lives and in our communities.

Today, we considered H.J. Res. 88, The Marriage Protection Amendment. This legislation seeks to alter the United States Constitution—the bedrock of democracy and the basis of our Republic for 217 years—to define marriage as the union between one man and one woman. The U.S. Constitution embodies the federalist principles this country was founded on and should be held to the highest standard. It should only be altered in the most extreme circumstances. I believe opening this document to allow such a narrow definition could lead to unintended consequences in the near and far future. Our commitment to federalist principles and to this great Republic must supersede all debates of the day.

Furthermore, I strongly believe that one of the most important powers reserved to the States as a result of the 10th Amendment is the act of regulating marriage and family law. This right of States to self-determination has protected and sustained our Republic for more than 200 years.

While serving in the Florida Senate in 1997, I voted to support a statute stating that marriage is the union of one man and one woman. This statute became State law and was in response to action taken by the U.S. Congress to ensure the right of the States to define marriage.

In 1996, the U.S. Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act, DOMA, which was subsequently signed into law. DOMA provides each State the discretion to determine whether to recognize a same-sex marriage license issued by another State. I strongly support DOMA because it protects the right of States to self-determination.

On July 22, 2004, I supported the Protection of Marriage Act which would have permitted States to reject same-sex marriages from other States without interference by Federal courts.

Since the passage of DOMA, 45 states, such as Florida, have banned gay marriage by statute or in their Constitutions, and numerous court decisions have upheld these laws. Where judicial activism has threatened traditional marriage, the people have acted to protect it, such as in the State of Massachusetts, where a ballot initiative is being circulated to overturn a court ruling allowing for same-sex marriage.

Moreover, it is my belief that the U.S. Supreme Court will ensure that States' rights and the institution of traditional marriage are upheld. Additionally, as a result of past Supreme Court decisions, exemptions have been made to the ''Full Faith and Credit Clause'' that apply to DOMA. If the Supreme Court, at any point in the future, did attempt to redefine marriage as something other than the union between one man and one woman, I want to be clear that I would determine it an extreme circumstance and would at that time advocate a Constitutional Amendment.

Congress must be diligent in its efforts not to overstep and impede on more than two centuries of a successful Republic without absolute necessity. I strongly believe that marriage should only be the union between one man and one woman, but I do not believe that the threshold for constitutional change has been reached.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my disappointment that this body has brought the Marriage Protection Act to the Floor at a time when American families are dealing with skyrocketing health costs, rising gas prices, and loved ones who are serving the Nation overseas. Mr. Speaker, is the matter before us today truly the most important subject for Congress to debate?

This is not to say that I believe the issue of gay marriage to be unworthy of discussion. I understand that some people firmly regard gay marriage as a civil right while others find it antithetical to their religious or moral beliefs. Reasonable people can disagree on this issue, and it is a subject which our country must continue to discuss. In America, however, the authority to grant legal status to a marriage has been a function reserved for the States, and different States have different laws regarding issues ranging from blood-testing to waiting periods before marriage.

Some, including the proponents of this bill, will argue that an amendment to the U.S. Constitution is necessary to keep one State from forcing another to accept same-sex marriages. In fact, this is not necessary because of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Law, which provides that States, U.S. territories, or Indian tribes do not have to recognize same-sex marriages granted by other States. Further, the Act defines marriage, for the purpose of Federal benefits and rules, as the legal union between one man and one woman. Therefore, the Wisconsin law which recognizes marriage as a relationship between a husband and wife is protected.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to amending the United States Constitution, I am very conservative. Like Republican Senator CHUCK HAGEL, conservative columnist George F. Will, and the Republican author of the Defense of Marriage Act, Bob Barr, I am opposed to amending the Constitution for the purpose of outlawing gay marriage. In its 215-year history, the Constitution has been amended only 27 times, and we must not add amendments limiting rights rather than expanding them.

DICK CHENEY has stated ''With respect to my views on the issue, I stated those during the course of the 2000 campaign, that I thought when it came to the question of whether or not some sort of legal status or legal sanction were granted to a same-sex relationship that that was a matter best left to the States. That was my view then. That's my view now.'' (Scripps Howard News Service, January 9, 2004). As recently as August, 2004, Vice President DICK CHENEY, speaking

of gay marriage, affirmed that, ''marriage has historically been a relationship that has been handled by the States.'' Like Vice President CHENEY, I do not believe the U.S. Congress needs to intrude on this State issue. Because of my great respect for the Constitution, and for the Federal nature of the government which the document dictates, I oppose this resolution, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same. Because of illness, I was unable to cast my vote on today's amendment; had I been able to, I would have voted ''no.''

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I cannot support changing the Constitution along the lines of this proposal—so I will not vote for this resolution.

Under our federal system, there are many matters where the states have broad latitude to shape their laws and policies in ways their residents think fit, subject to the U.S. Constitution's provisions protecting individual rights. And one of those areas has been family law, including the regulation of marriage and divorce. But this amendment would change that.

Adoption of this amendment would for the first time impose a constitutional restriction on the ability of a state to define marriage. And it would do so in a way that would restrict, not protect, individual rights that now are protected in at least some states. I think this is not necessary or appropriate.

Some of the resolution's supporters say it is needed so a state whose laws ban same-sex marriages or civil unions will not be forced to recognize such marriages or unions established under another state's laws.

They say this could happen because Article IV of the Constitution requires each state to give full faith and credit to another state's public acts, records, and judicial proceedings. But my understanding is that this part of the Constitution has never been construed to require states to recognize the validity of all marriages of people from other states.

Instead, over the years various states have refused to recognize some out-of-state marriages—and the ''full faith and credit'' clause has not been used to force them to do otherwise—because marriages are not judgments but civil contracts that a state may choose to recognize as a matter of comity, not as a constitutional requirement.

As if this were not enough, in 1996 Congress passed and President Clinton signed into law the Defense of Marriage Act. That law says ''No State, territory, or possession of the United States, or Indian tribe, shall be required to give effect to any public act, record, or judicial proceeding of any other State, territory, possession, or tribe respecting a relationship between persons of the same sex that is treated as a marriage under the laws of such other State, territory, possession, or tribe, or a right or claim arising from such relationship.''

Not everyone supported that bill at the time. But it did pass, and now that law is on the books and has not been successfully challenged.

Given this history, I am not convinced that this constitutional amendment is necessary to prevent the full faith and credit clause being used to compel a state to recognize a same-sex marriage.

Moreover, when you focus on the language of the proposed amendment it becomes clear that protecting states is not its real purpose.

That purpose could be achieved by an amendment to the full faith and credit clause—perhaps by putting language along the lines of the Defense of Marriage Act into the constitution itself. But that is not what is being proposed here.

Instead, this amendment would restrict states, by establishing a single definition of marriage—the only definition that any state could recognize.

And, unlike other constitutional amendments, it would not protect individuals either. It would write into the Constitution a new limit on what legal rights they could hope to have protected by a state or the federal government.

If adopted, this amendment would restrict individual liberties instead of expanding them. So, I think it is clear the real purpose of this amendment is to lay a foundation for discrimination against some Americans on the basis of their sexual orientation. In good conscience, I cannot support that.

Mr. Speaker, no proposed constitutional amendment should be taken lightly. On the contrary, I think such proposals require very careful scrutiny and should not be adopted unless we are convinced that a change in our fundamental law is essential.

I do not think this resolution meets that test, and so I will vote against it.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 88, the Marriage Protection Amendment. Passage of this resolution will not protect marriage, and I am concerned it will create the opposite effect of what its proponents seek to accomplish.

Let me first state that I believe that marriage is a sacred union between one man and one woman. I strongly support the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) passed by Congress and signed into law in 1996.

Second, marriage is an issue that our Founding Fathers wisely left to the states. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution states, ''The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.''

No Congress ever has seen fit to amend the Constitution to address any issue related to marriage. No Constitutional Amendment was needed to ban polygamy or bigamy, nor was a Constitutional Amendment needed to set a uniform age of majority to ban child marriages.

So why do proponents argue that we must take this unprecedented step now to ban same-sex marriages?

They claim that without the Amendment, states will be forced to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. Yet the Defense of Marriage Act not only prohibits federal recognition of same-sex marriages, it allows individual states to refuse to recognize such unions performed in other states. And in the nearly 10 years that have passed since its enactment, DOMA never has been invalidated in any court in the country. The authors of DOMA took the greatest pains to write a law that is constitutional and will withstand judicial challenges.

Proponents also claim that amending the Constitution is the only way to prevent so-called activist judges from legislating matters of same-sex marriage. Yet amending the Constitution to address marriage could invite federal judicial review not only of marriage, but of divorce, child custody, inheritance, adoption, and other issues of family law. Not only would this violate the principles of federalism, it would create very bad public policy.

Mr. Speaker, no legislature in the country has established same-sex marriage in statute. In fact, 45 states, including Illinois, have adopted laws limiting marriage to one man and one woman.

I urge my colleagues to have faith in our system of government, keep marriage out of the Constitution, and allow the states to continue to exercise what is best left to them.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Joint Resolution 88. Most Americans believe that marriage should be defined as the legal union of one man and one woman. But as we have seen in the past several years, attacks on marriage by unelected and unaccountable judges threaten to destroy this long-standing and widely accepted institution. I firmly believe that activist judges should not be able to overturn the marriage laws of almost every state based on bizarre legal theories. Although I believe we must be extremely careful in amending the Constitution, this is a critically important issue for our country. We must place the vital institution of marriage beyond the reach of activist courts.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88.

Instead of spending time working on the issues that really matter to the American people, we are here debating a proposed amendment that would write discrimination into the Constitution.

We do this even after the Senate failed to pass a similar amendment.

So let's be clear, regardless of what the vote is today, this amendment is going nowhere.

This makes our time on this even more pointless.

What this debate really is about is dividing our country and riling up the base for a Republican party increasingly concerned about their election prospects this November.

And the Republican leadership is willing to trample on our Constitution in order to do so and no issue is worth paying such a price.

Instead of debating discrimination and dividing our country, why don't we spend our time working to make health care more affordable, work to lower gas prices and achieve energy independence, raise the minimum wage, cut the cost of college or work to ensure our hard-working constituents a dignified retirement?

Why is it that my Republican colleagues who talk so much about family values refuse to allow our families to earn a livable wage, refuse to fix the prescription drug program and turn their backs on our children by raising the interest rate on all student loans?

We must resist this divisive use of this House to score a few political points. We must reject this effort.

We need real leadership that will bring our country towards a new direction.

There is a new direction that our country must go in that will help American families and address the issues that impact them every single day.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my strong opposition to H.J. Res. 88, a proposed Constitutional amendment that would prohibit same sex marriages. This proposed amendment is not directed at any real problem, other than the apparent need of the Republican leadership to gin up political support for their candidates.

It is sad that the Republican leadership is not as interested as they say they are in protecting the institution of marriage as they are

in waging a campaign to divide and distract the American people from the real issues that need to be addressed. The Nation is at war in Iraq; we face crises in Iran, North Korea and Lebanon; the federal deficit is soaring out of control as more and more U.S. debt is controlled by countries like China; energy costs continue to rise and Americans wait for Congress to act to increase the minimum wage. The Republican response: wasting hours of debate on an unnecessary Constitutional amendment that had already been defeated in the Senate.

Studies have consistently shown that financial hardship is the biggest obstacle to heterosexual marriage, yet the Republican leadership has done precious little to help address the financial hardship faced by American families.

American families need job security; better child care options; national flextime policies that allow more young parents to work from home and to be with their families; better public schools; federal policies to make sure college is affordable; housing policies that promote the construction of homes that working families can afford; and health care so that no child has to go without the medical and dental treatment he or she needs.

Instead, today, we vote on an effort to single out one group of Americans, in a pointless, partisan move that does nothing to address the major challenges facing our Nation—education, the economy, energy, homeland security and the war in Iraq.

For over 200 years, our Constitution has defined our Nation and protected individual rights. It is a document of empowerment, not limitation. While the Constitution has been amended, it has been done so only to protect and expand individual liberty, not to deny it.

Americans see this amendment for what it is: a partisan waste of time, and that is why we need a new direction in Washington that would prioritize the needs of every-day working people.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this resolution, and I call on my colleagues to join me in defeating it.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I oppose this constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage. The legislation before us today is nothing more than an attempt by the Republican leadership to exploit a wedge issue that panders to their political base and diverts attention from their abysmal record of non-accomplishment and rubberstamping the incompetence of the Bush Administration.

As we get closer to the end of this Congress, we should be addressing the urgent needs of the American people—the war in Iraq, affordable health care, a sensible energy policy, quality education for our children, retirement security, and a sound and fair fiscal policy.

Whatever one's view is on same sex marriage, amending the Constitution is not the place to address this issue. The laws governing marriage fall under the domain of the states and that is where this issue should be addressed. Amendments to the Constitution have historically expanded, not diminished, the rights and liberties of the American people. We should not use the Constitution as a political tool to divide us. The American people will see through the motivations behind this amendment—to distract the American people from the failed record of the Republican leadership in the Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to work to unite the American people, address the real issues facing our Nation, and reject this amendment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 918, the joint resolution is considered read and the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

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. KINGSTON. Mr. 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 236, nays 187, answered ''present'' 1, not voting 9, as follows:

[Roll No. 378]

YEAS—236

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Beauprez
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Boozman
Boren
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Cooper
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (AL)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Doolittle
Drake
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Etheridge
Everett
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hoekstra
Holden
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jefferson
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Jones (NC)
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris
Melancon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Porter
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ross
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schmidt
Scott (GA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skelton
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Sodrel
Souder
Spratt
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thomas
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—187

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Bass
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Biggert
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Bono
Boswell
Brady (PA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Castle
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Conyers
Costa
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (CA)
Davis (FL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle
Dreier
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Foley
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Higgins
Hinchey
Hobson
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy (RI)
Kildee
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kirk
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Rangel
Reyes
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz (PA)
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shays
Sherman
Simmons
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Stark
Stupak
Sweeney
Tauscher
Thompson (CA)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—1

Lipinski

NOT VOTING—9

Brown (OH)
Davis (IL)
Evans
Hinojosa
Johnson, Sam
Kind
McKinney
Northup
Strickland

□ 1400

So (two-thirds of those voting having not responded in the affirmative) the joint resolution was not passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 378 on July 18th I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, regarding the Federal marriage amendment, I was detained coming in from the airport, missed the vote by 4 minutes, and would have voted ''nay'' on the Federal marriage amendment, rollcall 378.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 378, which I missed as a result of my being detained at the airport, I indicate for the RECORD that I would have voted ''nay'' had I been here for that vote.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in meetings downtown with my constituents. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 378 because I continue to believe the issue of what constitutes a marriage should be left to the states to determine. I also believe that we should not set a precedent by amending the constitution in a way that narrows the rights of individuals.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.J. Res. 88.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 later today.

SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING WELFARE REFORMS

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 438) expressing the sense of the Congress that continuation of the welfare reforms provided for in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 should remain a priority.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 438

Whereas the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program established by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–193) has succeeded in moving families from welfare to work and reducing child poverty;

Whereas there has been a dramatic increase in the employment of current and former welfare recipients;

Whereas the percentage of working recipients reached an all-time high in fiscal year 1999 and held steady in fiscal years 2000 and 2001;

Whereas, in fiscal year 2004, 32 percent of adult recipients were counted as meeting TANF work participation requirements, significantly above pre-reform levels;

Whereas earnings for welfare recipients remaining on the rolls also have increased significantly, as have earnings for female-headed households;

Whereas single mothers, on average, earned $13.50 per hour in 2004, almost three times the minimum wage;

Whereas the increases have been particularly large for the bottom 2 income quintiles, that is, those women who are most likely to be former or current welfare recipients;

Whereas welfare dependency has plummeted;

Whereas, as of September 2005, 1,887,855 families, including 4,443,170 individuals, were receiving TANF assistance, and accordingly, the number of families in the welfare caseload and the number of individuals receiving cash assistance declined 56 percent and 61 percent, respectively, since the enactment of the TANF program;

Whereas, since the enactment of welfare reform, the number of children in the United States has grown from 69,000,000 in 1995 to 73,000,000 in 2004, which is an increase of 4,000,000, yet 1,400,000 fewer children were living in poverty in 2004 than in 1995—a 14 percent decline in overall child poverty;

Whereas the poverty rates for African-American and Hispanic children also have declined remarkably—20 percent and 28 percent, respectively, since 1995;

Whereas, as a Nation, we have made substantial progress in reducing teen pregnancies and births, slowing increases in nonmarital childbearing, and improving child support collections and paternity establishment;

Whereas the birth rate to teenagers declined 30 percent from its high in 1991 to 2004. The 2004 teenage birth rate of 41.2 per 1,000 women aged 15 through 19 is the lowest recorded birth rate for teenagers since 1940;

Whereas, during the period from 1991 through 2001, teenage birth rates fell in all States and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands;

Whereas such declines also have spanned age, racial, and ethnic groups;

Whereas there has been success in lowering the birth rate for both younger and older teens;

Whereas the birth rate for those aged 15 through 17 declined 43 percent since 1991, the rate for those aged 18 and 19 declined 26 percent, and the rate for African American teens—until recently the highest—declined the most—falling 47 percent from 1991 through 2004;

Whereas, since the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, child support collections within the child support enforcement system have grown every year, increasing from $12,000,000,000 in fiscal year 1996 to over $22,000,000,000 in fiscal year 2004;

Whereas the number of paternities established or acknowledged in fiscal year 2003—over 1,600,000—includes an almost 300 percent increase in paternities established through in-hospital acknowledgement programs promoted by the 1996 welfare reforms, and there were almost 915,000 paternities established this way in 2004 compared to 324,652 in 1996;

Whereas child support collections were made in nearly 8,100,000 cases in fiscal year 2004, significantly more than the almost 4,000,000 cases in which a collection was made in 1996;

Whereas the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 gave States great flexibility in the use of Federal funds to develop innovative programs to help families leave welfare and begin employment, and to encourage the formation of 2-parent families;

Whereas annual Federal funding for under the new TANF block grant program have been held constant at the all-time highs set in 1995, despite unprecedented welfare caseload declines and despite the fact that States may spend as little as 75 percent as much as they spent spending under the prior AFDC program;

Whereas total welfare and child care funds available per family increased over 130 percent between 1995 and 2004, from $6,934 to $16,185;

Whereas child care expenditures have quadrupled under welfare reform, rising from $3,000,000,000 in 1995 to $12,000,000,000 in 2004;

Whereas, under the TANF program, States have enjoyed significant new flexibility in making policy choices and investment decisions best suited to the needs of their citizens;

Whereas, despite all of these successes, there is still progress to be made;

Whereas significant numbers of welfare recipients still are not engaged in employment-related activities;

Whereas, while all States have met the overall work participation rates required by law, in an average month, only 41 percent of all TANF families with an adult participated in work activities for even a single hour that was countable toward the State's work participation rate;

Whereas, in 2002, 34 percent of all births in the United States were to unmarried women;

Whereas, despite recent progress in reducing teen pregnancy in general, with fewer teens entering marriage, the proportion of births to unmarried teens has increased dramatically to 80 percent in 2002 from 30 percent in 1970;

Whereas the negative consequences of out-of-wedlock birth on the mother, the child, the family, and society are well documented;

Whereas the negative consequences include increased likelihood of welfare dependency, increased risks of low birth weight, poor cognitive development, child abuse and neglect, teen parenthood, and decreased likelihood of having an intact marriage during adulthood, and these outcomes result despite the often heroic struggles of mostly single mothers to care for their families;

Whereas there has been a dramatic rise in cohabitation as marriages have declined;

Whereas an estimated 40 percent of children are expected to live in a cohabiting-parent family at some point during their childhood;

Whereas children in single-parent households and cohabiting-parent households are at much higher risk of child abuse than children in intact married families;

Whereas children who live apart from their biological fathers are, on average, more likely to be poor, experience educational, health, emotional, and psychological problems, be victims of child abuse, engage in criminal

behavior, and become involved with the juvenile justice system than their peers who live with their married, biological mother and father;

Whereas, despite the strenuous efforts of single mothers to care for their children, a child living with a single mother is nearly 5 times as likely to be poor as a child living in a married-couple family; and

Whereas, in 2003, in married-couple families, the child poverty rate was 8.6 percent: in households headed by a single mother the poverty rate was 41.7 percent: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of the Congress that increasing success in moving families from welfare to work, as well as in promoting healthy marriage and other means of improving child well-being, as promoted by the welfare reforms in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, are very important Government interests and should remain priorities for the responsible Federal and State agencies in the years ahead for assisting needy families and others at risk of poverty and dependence on government benefits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the concurrent resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 438. This resolution does something we don't do enough of in this institution: It takes a look back at what Congress tried to do in the previous years and assesses whether we got it right. As the text of the resolution suggests, many people, including some former critics, think we got it right.

Mr. Speaker, the results of the 1996 welfare reform are remarkable in terms of achieving and in some cases exceeding the goals the Nation laid out when Congress took on this challenging issue. Former Wisconsin Governor and Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson has called welfare reform one of the most successful social policy changes in U.S. history, and I think he is right. In terms of reducing dependence, promoting work and earnings, and reducing poverty, it would be hard to mask the outcomes of these reforms.

I would also like to thank my colleague CLAY SHAW for his steadfast leadership and tireless work to enact these remarkable reforms. Welfare reform did not happen overnight. And it would not have happened without his strong leadership.

Ten years ago today, this House passed what went on to become the landmark 1996 welfare reform law. At that time nearly 12 million parents and children were dependent on the government. Today, after 10 years of reforms and much success, that number is down to fewer than 5 million individuals dependent on welfare checks for support, a decline of an unprecedented 64 percent, almost two-thirds. Millions of those families now collect a paycheck instead of a welfare check. Since welfare reform was enacted, we have seen a sharp increase in work among welfare recipients. This is a stark contrast to the Nation's former welfare program under which there was no incentive to work. In fact, the prior program actually punished work. But today, because of welfare reform, work among those on welfare has more than doubled. And to support working families, the amount taxpayers provide for child care has tripled from $4 billion to nearly $12 billion today.

Back in 1996, welfare reform opponents argued that if enacted, this law would result in millions of additional children living in poverty. However, they were wrong with this prediction as they were with all their other predictions about what this law would accomplish. Compared to 1996, 1.4 million fewer children are in poverty today. This is a direct result of the pro-work, pro-family policies passed in 1996 and which are still in place today.

Earlier this year, the House accompanied by the Senate sent President Bush legislation to extend and strengthen the 1996 reforms to help even more low-income parents go to work. All States are now busy revamping their programs to meet that challenge. Based on the results of the 1996 reforms, we should have great confidence that millions more families will succeed in finding and keeping jobs in the years ahead. That is something every Member and, indeed, every American should support.

Again, I would like to thank CLAY SHAW for all his work in this area over so many years. I look forward to continuing to work in the years ahead to support all families in their efforts to end their dependence on government assistance.

I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

We have before us today a Republican resolution that should be backdated to the last Democratic President, if it is to be honest, because when America actually made great strides in decreasing poverty it was during that administration. But that is not what we are about today. This is a PR event.

H. Con. Res. 438 is a Republican attempt to take a victory lap on something they have done right. I mean on the war and gas prices and everything else, they cannot say anything. But in the run-up to this election, they are borrowing the vision and the success under the leadership of Mr. Clinton.

The resolution is not about reducing poverty. It is about increasing Republican poll numbers. America's poor and disadvantaged deserve a fair shake, not a glad hand.

It is unmistakably clear that domestic priorities under the current Republican administration and Republican Congress have focused on the rich, not the middle class, not the working class, and certainly not the disadvantaged class. And the record will show the great strides we have made to reduce poverty peaked in the year 2000, the beginning of the Bush administration, and they have been on a downward spiral ever since. The rate of poverty has been climbing during the Bush administration. The number of two-parent families living in poverty has increased during the Bush administration, and the number of American children living in poverty has also increased during the Bush administration.

Now, you have to draw the line somewhere; so I intend to vote ''no'' because I want a real agenda for reducing poverty in America. Congress needs a renewed commitment, not a disingenuous celebration. It was the pre-Bush economy that boosted the value of work. And that is not all. This resolution ignores the domestic priorities championed by Democrats that have made a meaningful difference in the lives of ordinary Americans, like the earned income tax credit.

Instead of a resolution meant to increase the poll numbers, we ought to be passing legislation to increase the minimum wage. We have tried and we have tried, and you can really do something for poverty if you would do it. In one stroke we could do more to reduce poverty in this country than all the resolutions that you have offered since the President took office 6 years ago.

That is an honest assessment of the situation. There is a concurrent resolution I authored with Mr. LEVIN. Since the Republicans will not allow us to consider it, let me take a moment to discuss it. It offers an honest assessment of where we are today. It highlights the progress made in the second half of the 1990s on poverty and unemployment. It also makes it clear that poverty has increased since 2000 with more than 5 million more Americans falling into poverty, including 1.5 million children. If you call that success, it is a strange success.

The percentage of single moms who are working today has declined by 4 percent since the beginning of the Bush administration. And we are sticking the States with new unfunded mandates; so there will be much less money available in the next several years to deal with this growing problem. That is the Republican solution.

Our resolution makes reducing poverty a national priority, not wishful thinking, by supporting the States,

who are the Nation's first responders in fighting poverty. We would like to have a great debate over whether or not America's best interest is served by a Republican resolution created for the campaign trail or by a Democratic resolution created to meet America's needs. As it now stands, the debate is about Republican photo ops and press releases, which I am sure have already been mailed.

This resolution is designed by the Republicans so that they can try to take a victory lap after some successes in the welfare. But there cannot be a victory lap because the race is not over. Poverty is up, wages are down, and the working poor are losing in the Bush economy.

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

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

It would be nice if today we could all work in a bipartisan way to take credit for something that Congress has done which has been so incredibly successful. I really regret the negative tone I hear from my good friends on the other side of the aisle.

They made the comment that President Clinton had signed this. I think we should let the history speak for itself.

□ 1415

The fact is, after the Democrats opposed this legislation every inch of the way, opposing it in subcommittee, opposing it in the full committee, opposing it on the House floor, voting against it, and then having President Clinton vetoing it, not once, but twice, and only before the election where he was afraid that maybe the people might throw him out if he continued to oppose it did he finally sign it, did we finally get it. And after these dire predictions that the sky was going to fall in, that we have these incredible results that we have, again, it would be nice if we could all take credit here for something we have done well. It is regrettable we can't.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and ask unanimous consent that the gentleman control the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) will control the balance of the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), who has a different view of welfare reform as the Governor of a State who did a tremendous job in that capacity at the time we were changing welfare reform and the way it served America.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for the wonderful job he has done on this.

We started on welfare reform in Delaware very early on, long before the Federal Government started to look at it, and, obviously, it involved people having to go to classes and having to go to work. It was rather unique at the time.

I remember going to the first class, it was 19 people, 18 women and a man, and I sort of trembled. I was Governor of Delaware and I was a little nervous about that because I figured they wouldn't be receptive at all.

My mind was completely turned around going to that class when those 19 individuals said thank you for giving us the opportunity. They were being educated at that point. I went to their graduation later. They then went on to get jobs, and they subsequently went off welfare and became contributing citizens.

I can't tell you the value of this program, the self-esteem of individuals who have been through this. You can look at the statistics, be it 40, 50, 60 percent, in the various States, and that is about where it is, for the reduction of people on welfare. And you say perhaps it saved money, although, frankly, it doesn't save a lot of money. It costs a lot to educate and day care and everything else.

But the bottom line is that we have actually helped individuals. Indeed, it is a program which I think Republicans and Democrats have been supporting and should take credit for. And I certainly give some credit to President Clinton, because I worked with him as a Governor on this program as well.

But it has made a huge difference in their mindset. It has made a huge difference in their families' mindset. It has made a difference in the children of these individuals, who see their parents going off to work and earning a living, perhaps having a little more spending money and being able to hold themselves high as far as their immediate society is concerned.

This has been a highly successful program. It is true, I think, what Tommy Thompson said about it, and that is it is perhaps the greatest social reform program we have seen in this country.

Every now and then something comes along which really can make a difference in the lives of people. I just would like to thank all those who worked on this, and I worked with some of them, mostly members of the Ways and Means Committee when they were working with CLAY SHAW and others, because there was a lot of opposition to this.

But, indeed, it is a program which worked, it is a program which should be continued and expanded if possible, and it is a program for which I think we will always look back and be able to take some good positive credit for.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. STARK).

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

Mr. STARK. The resolution before us, Mr. Speaker, ignores the realities of increasing child poverty, stagnating wages and lost opportunities for those families and children left behind by the so-called success of the welfare reform. Pilot SHAW has landed his plane on the aircraft carrier and said ''mission accomplished,'' and the carrier sank.

This resolution, looking at a 10-year window, ignores the disturbing trends of the last 5 years during the Bush Republican Presidency. Total poverty has increased for 4 consecutive years, and more than 37 million people are living in poverty today. Child poverty has been on the rise for 5 straight years, and 13 million children are struggling in poverty today. Real wages for low-income workers have been stagnant for 5 consecutive years. It is time for the minimum wage to be raised, but the Republicans don't care to represent poor people, only rich.

Nearly one in three poor single women are not working and not receiving TANF assistance, and fewer than half of the families eligible for TANF receive it. Child care funding under the Republicans is $11 billion short of what CBO estimates the States need. The administration funneled $2 billion alone to religious organizations, trusting in this faith-based stuff, and the GAO has found the Bush faith-based initiative lacks accountability and safeguards against discrimination. And this has been, as Congressman SHAW would claim, the most successful social policy in history.

What is it, sir, that you don't understand about the word ''failure''? Instead of engaging in this political public relations charade, we should be working on a bipartisan basis to confront realities of poverty in this country. We should move ourselves into the present and work to ensure that we provide States with the resources they need to move families out of poverty, instead of wasting time defining marriage.

We should focus on real programs that help families improve their lives. We need to improve their lives, expand the Earned Income Tax Credit, raise the minimum wage, increase access to Medicaid and Medicare, CHIP and food stamps. We need to provide work supports such as sufficient funding for children, remove the barriers to employment, provide education and training opportunities and get to work and solve the problem of poverty, instead of making tax cuts for the very rich and ignoring the middle class and doing it on the backs of the poor. That is the Republican way. The Democrats' way is to help everybody in this country rise out of poverty.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH).

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman who as chairman of the Human Resources Subcommittee when I was a freshman was one of the key players in steering the welfare reform through.

I was a freshman when our new majority came to power and was determined to do things differently. As a result, we were able to push forward on a key initiative to change the welfare system in a fundamental way. We were successful. We came up against terrific resistance, initially resistance from the administration; but we were able to steer it through. Ten years later it is clear that we were successful.

As the gentleman said, this is a profoundly successful social reform. It is the most successful reform for bringing people out of poverty that we saw in the 20th century.

We have seen dramatic reductions in welfare dependence, fewer families in poverty, increases in work and earnings and declines in waste, fraud and abuse of welfare benefits. And this has occurred, I believe, in the context of a clear contrast, because they took a completely different position when we put forward this new welfare reform initiative.

May I quote the gentleman who is managing the time on the other side. It was just 10 years ago that he said of this legislation: ''It will put 1½ million to 2½ million children into poverty. In about 1998, you are going to start to see the impacts on cities, with more homeless families. They can't pay their rent. You will wind up with people living under bridges and in cardboard boxes.'' That is what Mr. MCDERMOTT said in 1995.

The reality is that we brought people out of poverty, we have brought the caseloads down, we have given the States more flexibility to deal with welfare problems. And it was this majority that fought them, fought them successfully, got a bill to the White House that that President could sign, and, in the process, started a transformation of our welfare system which continues today.

Mr. Speaker, we should celebrate this landmark and move forward with further reform of the welfare system.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

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

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, the majority says they want to recognize the past. What you are doing in this resolution is to twist it. So let me say again what the facts were.

The bill was vetoed by Mr. Clinton, by the President, because of inadequate child support and inadequate health care provisions. He so stated. He had started this effort to reform welfare, but the inadequacies in the bills that came before him required a veto.

What was the result of the veto, of the two vetoes? Money was put in for child care and for health care. It is ironic that this resolution brags about the amount of money for child care. Without those vetoes, a lot of those moneys never would have been in welfare reform.

The same is true of transitional Medicaid.

So come here, but don't, for totally partisan electoral purposes twist the history of this. You are twisting it. Maybe you think it will gain you a few votes, but you lose your credibility and you lose any chance of proceeding on a bipartisan basis.

You did the same thing in the bill that was passed just some months ago on welfare reform. You cut child support. This resolution talks about child support collections increasing; but in the bill that was passed recently, you made arrangements for a reduction in child support estimated by CBO to be $8.4 billion over the next 10 years.

You talk in this resolution about giving States ''great flexibility in the use of Federal funds.'' That was one of the advantages of the 1996 legislation and that is one reason why a good number of Democrats voted for it.

In the 2006 legislation, you reduced the flexibility of the States. I want to just refer to some of the programs that the States have used that would probably be disentangled by this 2006 legislation:

The Portland Program, that has some strategies so that people can upgrade their skills and get out of poverty. The Corpus Christi Employment, Retention and Advance Program. The Maine Program, that does rely on some higher education, including a 4-year degree. And also the Utah Program, that was very advanced in terms of addressing substance abuse and mental health. So you essentially have reduced the flexibility of the States.

Let me talk for a moment about poverty and what was the main problem with the 2006 legislation. The data that we have show this, more or less, that 60 to 70 percent of the people who have moved from welfare to work have been earning less than 42 percent of the median average wage in their States.

We were hopeful in the 2006 legislation that we would take a further step in welfare reform, that we would help people not only move from welfare to work, but from welfare to work that would take them out of poverty.

You, on a strictly partisan basis, did not even bother to talk to us. You made no effort. You would not even work with us to try to provide a law that would help people move from welfare to work.

So I regret your spurning any effort to make this resolution bipartisan. I think instead of recognizing the past, you are mainly twisting it; and there has been a failure of this Congress to take the next steps in welfare reform so people move from poverty into something beyond it when they move from welfare to work.

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

Mr. Speaker, it is amazing, the gentleman who just left the well, when he would say this is a partisan resolution. I don't think the Republican name is in this resolution whatsoever. It is a figment of his imagination.

This was a team effort. President Clinton did sign this bill. This is not a partisan resolution. So why don't you join with us and rejoice in what we have accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LINDER), a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 438, of which I am an original cosponsor, which expresses the sense of the Congress that historic welfare reforms begun with the 1996 Welfare Reform Act should continue forward and continue to remain a priority.

I wrote in 1979 that it was not uncommon for a government program to be begun for noble worthy purposes and end up becoming an end in itself.

□ 1430

The more assistance that was distributed, the more necessary the program, and the means became the ends. Before the consideration of the welfare reform bill 10 years ago, there was no indication that some of these government programs would be improved, much less encourage self-sufficiency. This is not surprising, given how the welfare reform bill was described on this floor as, ''the most cruel and shortsighted view on public policy I have seen in 20 years'', and, ''a mean-spirited attack on children and poor families in America that fails every test of true welfare reform'', and ''a cruel attack on America's children''.

Well, as we mark the 10th anniversary of the signing of the bill, the statistics show the successes. Welfare caseloads have declined almost 65 percent. The poverty rate has declined. The child poverty rate has declined. The number of children lifted from poverty is 1.4 million, and the number of adults receiving welfare and working has more than doubled since 1996. The employment rate of never-married mothers has increased by almost 35 percent.

We have achieved great progress in eradicating poverty in this Nation. Ten years ago, thousands of poor people who deserve much more from their government were unwitting pawns in the game for power over the lives of others. The 1996 Welfare Reform Act has been enormously successful and we must continue to help those who truly need assistance while encouraging those who can support their families to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I thank my friend for yielding me the time.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, this marks the 10th anniversary of the passage of the 1996 welfare bill, a measure I voted for. And the legislation certainly was not perfect, but the system that it supplanted

was even worse. Ten years on, instead of having a pep rally for TANF, I think what we ought to be doing is having a serious conversation about whether the program is being implemented in a way that effectively and realistically moves everyone who can work into a job so that they might support their family.

With Bill Clinton, the TANF program rightly demanded that able-bodied people do everything possible to find and keep a job. But it also recognized the fact that single moms needed help with child care and transportation in order to successfully and permanently transition out of public assistance. So the Clinton budgets provided that traditional assistance.

The Clinton budgets also made enforcement of child support payments a top priority, which gleaned billions of dollars, that pulled thousands of women and children out of poverty. Bill Clinton insisted on an increase in the minimum wage and an expanded earned income tax credit, which helped people earning the lowest wages support themselves.

And the results spoke for themselves. Even as welfare caseloads dropped, poverty rates fell for every year that Bill Clinton was in office. So what has happened in the last 5 years? Child care, cut. Food stamps, cut. Medicaid, cut. Child support enforcement, cut.

So it is a disappointment but not a surprise that poverty rates are once again on the rise. According to the Census Bureau in 2004, there were 13 million children living under the poverty line. Almost one American child in five grows up in a family that cannot pay for the bare essentials of life like food, shelter, and clothing.

How can we let this happen? Today I want people to listen to this. Today a minimum wage worker in America who puts in 40 hours a week and never takes a vacation day, listen to this, they earn, at minimum wage, $10,700 a year before taxes.

That is not enough for a single mother with one child to clear the poverty line. But I think it is the new face of compassionate conservatism. That is a full-time working mom who cannot possibly make ends meet for herself and her child. One in five kids in this country grows up in poverty.

The welfare bill was supposed to counteract these trends, and when Bill Clinton was in office it was doing a good job. But the programs that helped welfare reform demonstrate progress like child support enforcement, child care assistance, have been eviscerated by this Congress and this administration. But we always have time here for tax cuts for rich people. If we cannot take care of Paris Hilton, who can? This welfare bill was a good start, and if properly implemented, it was during the Clinton years, we would still be on the path to reform.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would remind the gentleman in the well that it is rare today that people work for minimum wage. But those who do earn $10,700 a year, they also get an earned income tax credit of $4,000. They also get food stamps worth $2,000. They get rent subsidies which varies.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HART).

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution. And I am somewhat mystified by some of the claims made by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I and several of my colleagues spent a significant amount of time making sure that additional moneys were put into this legislation when it was passed to make sure that there would be more money for child care.

That was signed by the President and is current law today. We have increased assistance to women who were on welfare, who are now working. We needed to do that in order to make sure that their children would be safe. Our goal of welfare reform was about family growth and security and future financial security.

Our goal was certainly not to put the children in jeopardy, and part of that complete goal was to make sure that they had availability of child care. We have worked to make sure it is available at different times of the day. We have worked to make sure that it is available and convenient, and obviously that those who are providers are providing safe child care.

Another point that I think is very important to refute is that there is something wrong with the direction we are moving in, asking for people to work more hours. Once they commit to receiving welfare, they commit to work more hours, and they do so. What we found, the statistics show that when people start to work, obviously, their incomes will rise. They begin to climb the ladder of future success and their children do not live in poverty.

I want to repeat this point, because again it is the most important goal that we had of welfare reform, to make sure that from generation to generation children are not living in poverty. And children have been lifted from poverty as a result of our welfare reform, and more will continue to be lifted out of poverty as a result of more work requirements. These children will grow up with a great example of industrious working parents, and they will do the same.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has a lot of missions before us. One of them certainly is to help encourage people to grow in their abilities, to grow in their talents and their willingness to teach their children. This welfare reform bill has helped us in all of those counts. I encourage my colleagues to support it.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, this resolution is a celebration of bad policy. I voted against it when it was a Clinton proposal, and I voted against it because my fear was, based on having been a past welfare mom, my fear was that ultimately it would be the kids who suffered. And how right I was.

So when the Congress reauthorized the welfare program recently, not a single Democrat voted for it, because Democrats know that what this bill does is fail to help families reach economic independence. Instead it pushes families off welfare, into the workforce without sufficient education, without adequate child care, and without a path to self-sufficiency.

If the Republican leadership was truly interested in improving families' welfare, it would be debating and passing an increase in the minimum wage, and we would be doing that today, instead of talking about celebrating welfare. The sad fact is that this Congress is more interested that fewer people get help than whether fewer people need help. And that is a shame.

I encourage my colleagues, please oppose this resolution, a resolution that is trying to celebrate bad policy. A policy that keeps children in poverty.

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the gentlewoman who just spoke that the poverty rate among children has dropped 13 percent since the passage of this resolution, and, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, could you tell us the time remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 4½ minutes, and the gentleman from Florida has 6 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, we go through a policy like this in 20 minutes. The Republican policy toward children is, you have no entitlement to anything. The point of welfare reform was to take away the entitlement of health and welfare, and housing and food from children, to take away the entitlement and put it to 50 States to whatever they want to do.

And we have 50 different plans in this country. The Republicans define welfare, people, those eligible for TANF, in such a way that you can drive down the numbers. You can push people off into work. And there is nobody on this side who has not worked in their life, who does not think it is a good idea to work.

But what we believe is that you ought to work for a wage that is fair and provides a decent living. The Republicans for the entire period this has been in place have refused to raise the minimum wage.

You want to drive people into poverty, and you did drive them into poverty, because when they are in poverty you can make them do anything. That is the way you keep the costs down in business, have a workforce of people who have to work for the minimum wage, and that is it for them.

Now, you have cut Medicare. Medicare in every State in this country is

in a terrible mess. There are 300,000 children eligible for child care in California who do not have access because there is no money. You say to the mothers, go out and work. Leave your kids at home, leave them a package of graham crackers, leave them a television, and leave them with their 12-year-old sister. That is the Republican plan.

You also take away their housing benefits. When they go off of TANF they do not get access to those housing benefits they had before. So you take away every single piece of security for a child who knows they have a home, who knows there is going to be food on the table, who is going to have a parent there when they come home from school. And then you ask yourself why you have a drug problem in this country. Why you have kids getting in trouble everywhere, why the prisons are full.

This is the result of a public policy that says we do not believe in the common good. We cannot tax the rich, oh, no, no, we must not tax the rich, they need another wall around their compound. But you can put kids out on the street, with their mother working down at the local motel cleaning beds for $5.15 an hour, that is all right with you. It is that that we object to.

It is not that we do not think people should work, we just think they should work for a decent living, a decent wage, and you will not give them that. You want to define success. The press release will say, we have reduced the welfare rolls from 5 million, as it was in 2000, to about 1.9 today.

But you will say nothing of the human misery you have created by these policies. The reason none of us voted for the reauthorization was, you put no additional money in for child care. And you cut the benefits for health care. And you do not take care of the needs of the kids. This is not about adults. Adults can make it. But it is a question about whether we as Americans, as a part of the common good, think children are entitled to a decent and safe childhood.

And your answer is, we cut the welfare rolls, raise the flag, let's march around and have a big parade and we will send out press releases, we cut the welfare rolls. But poverty has increased. You have 5 million more people in poverty since Mr. Bush became President of the United States.

That is not an enviable record; 1½ million more children are in poverty. How can you celebrate that?

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

□ 1445

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know quite where to start in correcting the gentleman from Washington. First of all, he said that we didn't increase child care. Well, we had just done over a $1 billion increase, and that is just within the last few months. I would say that the gentleman's memory is a little short.

He also talked about a secret Republican agenda. I was in charge of this bill 10 years ago, and I insisted that we did not do any of that. In fact, I don't know of anybody that was trying to do that. I maintained that we had to keep up the food programs, we had to keep up the Medicaid payments, taking care of the health care. We had to take care of the kids. We had to produce child care, in addition to all of this and all of the other programs that go along with the poverty program.

But what did we expect? We expected people to climb out of poverty. We are going to help them, but they are going to help themselves.

The problem of those who still oppose welfare reform is they have no faith. They didn't have any faith in the human spirit. We did have faith in the human spirit, and I can tell you the real champions, the real heroes of welfare reform are those who pull themselves out of poverty.

It is not the Members of Congress or the Senate that are sitting on this floor. It is the single mom, and she is the hero.

We started this program about 15, 16 years ago. We worked hard on it for many, many years. At every turn, we recognized the fragile nature of those that we were trying to rescue. Oh, we had a poverty program that was being guarded so carefully by those that wanted to pay people not to work, not to get married and have kids, the most destructive behavior you could possibly have.

I remember when we came to this floor and debated this bill. Some of the comments that were made back then, and I will read one of the worst ones, and I won't even mention the Member's name because I think it is so bad. It says: read the proposal, read the small print, read the Republican contract. They are coming for our children, they are coming for the poor. They are coming for the sick, the elderly and the disabled.

That is the stuff we were listening to on this floor when we were on a rescue mission. Through the debate on July 18, 1996, after several of the Democrat Members, some of whom have spoken today, spoke against the bill, President Clinton announced that he was coming on to television. We retired back into the Cloakroom to see what he was going to say. He looked right into the TV cameras, and he said, I am going to sign this bill.

Well, that brought about some Democratic votes, and it made it truly a bipartisan bill. Since then, the statistical information that is out there is history. Let me run down just some of the things that welfare reform has accomplished.

Welfare caseloads are now down by 64 percent, as nearly 8 million parents and children no longer receive welfare. The overall poverty rate dropped 7 percent, the child poverty dropped 13 percent, the poverty rate of young children in female-headed families, the group most likely to go on welfare, dropped 15 percent from 1996 to 2004.

Compared with 1996, 1.4 million fewer children lived in poverty in 2004. That is a victory. That is a victory for the human race. That is a victory for the poor Americans. The number of adults on welfare who work has more than doubled since welfare reform. More broadly, the work of all never-married mothers has surged 34 percent since 1996.

I will never forget, at one of our hearings, and I think, Mr. MCDERMOTT, you were there, when one of the welfare workers came in and was bragging about one of her clients who went to school. One of the young kids had gone to school, and he raised his hand to get the attention of the teacher. The teacher finally looked down and said, What do you want? He says, My momma went to work today.

What a wonderful thing. That mother who had nothing to do all day but sit around for the postman to come and bring her a check is now a role model for that child. What a difference that this has made.

Yes, this was a rescue program. We paid a lot of money for job training and things in order to accomplish this welfare reform package, and it has worked.

I can tell you I was stunned when the President said he was going to sign it, because all of a sudden I realized, my God, look what we have done, look what we have done. Now I can look back with great pride and see what this Congress did, what we accomplished, that rescue mission that took so many people out of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of the bill.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the welfare reforms provided in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. The House is considering H. Con. Res. 438 that expresses the sense of the Congress that continuation of the welfare reforms provided for in the 1996 welfare reform act should remain a priority. The House Resolution marks the 10th anniversary of the 1996 Republican-led enactment of welfare reform.

I strongly support H. Con. Res. 438 that celebrates 10 years of success in reducing welfare rolls and helping children and families escape from the cycle of poverty. Ten years ago, Republicans decided it was time to reform our broken welfare system and give welfare recipients the tools they needed to escape the system and build a better life. Today, we can see the results of those efforts—a 64 percent decrease in welfare caseloads, a sharp decline in child poverty, and a dramatic increase in the number of welfare recipients who work.

Since Republicans have passed welfare reform in 1996, the overall poverty rate has dropped 7 percent and 1.4 million fewer children are living in poverty. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H. Con. Res. 438. Support of this resolution is support for

continuing to move from welfare to work more quickly and promoting and encouraging stable, healthy families.

Mr. SHAW. 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 California (Mr. HERGER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 438.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 498) supporting the goals and ideals of School Bus Safety Week.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 498

Whereas approximately 480,000 yellow school buses carry 25 million children to and from school every weekday;

Whereas America's 480,000 school buses comprise the largest mass transportation fleet in the country, 2.5 times the size of all other forms of mass transportation—transit, intercity buses, commercial airlines, and rail—combined;

Whereas during the school year, school buses make more than 50 million passenger trips daily carrying the Nation's future—our children;

Whereas school bus transportation is eight times safer than traveling in a passenger vehicle and is the safest form of ground transportation available;

Whereas school buses meet higher construction, equipment, and inspection standards than any other vehicle, and school bus drivers meet higher qualification, training, and testing standards than any other drivers;

Whereas according to the National Academy of Sciences, an average of 820 students are killed annually during school transportation hours, but less than 2 percent of them are school bus passengers;

Whereas despite the industry's best efforts, accidents still happen;

Whereas an average of seven school-age passengers are killed in school bus crashes each year, and an average of 19 children are killed each year getting on and off the bus;

Whereas most of those killed are children aged five to seven, and most often those children are killed in the area immediately surrounding the bus—either by a passing vehicle or by the bus itself;

Whereas School Bus Safety Week, which is celebrated in more than 40 States and sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), was created to remind all students of the best ways to get on and off the bus in an effort to enhance the safety of the Nation's children;

Whereas School Bus Safety Week, which dates back to 1966, also recognizes the hard work and dedication of school transportation personnel, especially the many school bus drivers who ensure a safe journey each and every day; and

Whereas School Bus Safety Week, celebrated the third week in October, promotes awareness through local and State poster and speech contests, lessons utilizing school bus safety community awareness kits, and other activities built around themes that raise awareness of school bus safety issues: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of School Bus Safety Week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 498 offered by the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN). This resolution would support the goals and ideals of a National School Bus Safety Week.

In our Nation, approximately 22.5 million children ride school buses to and from school each day, which accounts for 54 percent of all students attending grade school. In fact, the more than 440,000 public school buses travel approximately 5 billion miles each year, comprising the largest mass transportation fleet in the country, 2½ times the size of all other forms of mass transportation, and according to statistics, representing the safest form of highway transportation.

Even so, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, each year for the past 11 years, an average of 35 school-age children have died in school bus-related traffic accidents. This is why it is vital that drivers, mechanics and supervisors, as well as parents and children, observe certain rules and regulations pertaining to all the operations of school bus safety.

The week of October 15 through October 21 will educate children around the country about school bus safety precautions with special activities such as poster contests to help bring the valuable information to our Nation's children.

I urge all Members to come together to encourage the educational importance of a School Bus Safety Week by adopting H. Res. 498.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, students are at a much greater risk while traveling to and from school than at any other time during their school day. During the 1997–98 school year, about 800 children from the ages of 5 through 18 were killed during normal school transportation hours, while traveling by passenger car, foot, bicycle, public transportation or school bus. Although school buses are the safest form of highway transportation, they are not fail-safe.

The most dangerous part of the school bus ride is getting on and off the school bus. Fatalities that occur when students board and exit school buses account for approximately three times as many school bus-related fatalities than for fatalities that occur when the school buses are occupied. The area around the bus when the bus is loading and unloading is called the danger zone. The danger zone is comprised of the areas outside of the bus where the children are in the most danger of not being seen by the driver. It is the 10 feet in front of the bus where the driver is too high to see a child, 10-foot-long blind spots that run along both sides of the bus, and the area behind the school bus.

The goal of National School Bus Safety Week is to ensure safe, efficient, economical and high-quality transportation for school children on their trips to and from school and school-related activities. This is certainly a goal we all can support, and I urge my colleagues to do so.

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

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague, the Congressman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN).

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding me this time and for managing this resolution and for his comments, as well as those of our distinguished colleague from Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, last October, I introduced House Resolution 498, which supports the goals and ideals promoted by School Bus Safety Week. This bill certainly has bipartisan support with 62 cosponsors. Also, all three national school bus associations are in support of this resolution: the National Association of Pupil Transportation, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation, and the National School Transportation Association.

America's 480,000 school buses comprise the largest mass transportation fleet in the country, 2½ times the size of all other forms of mass transportation, transit, intercity buses, commercial airlines, and rail combined.

During the school year, school buses make more than 50 million passenger trips daily. School Bus Safety Week, which is celebrated in more than 40 States and sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, was created to remind all students of the best ways to get on and off the bus and of other ways to enhance the safety of our Nation's children.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, an average of 820 students are killed annually during school transportation hours, but less than 2 percent of them are school bus passengers. Most of those killed are children aged 5 to 7, and most often those children are killed in the area immediately surrounding the bus, either by a passing vehicle or occasionally by the bus itself.

While school bus transportation is eight times safer than traveling in a passenger vehicle and is the safest form of ground transportation available, unfortunately, accidents still happen. An average of seven school-age passengers are killed in school bus crashes each year, and an average of 19 children are killed getting on and off the bus each year.

Many of our communities honor School Bus Safety Week through local and State poster and speech contests, lessons utilized in School Bus Safety Community Awareness kits and other activities built around themes that raise awareness of school bus safety issues.

It is my hope that our children will be safer than ever before, and that our children will safely get on and off and travel on these school buses each day, and that drivers in our communities will be mindful of the laws designed to protect our Nation's school bus passengers.

□ 1500

This is a business dominated by individuals and very small businesses. Most school bus drivers are stay-at-home moms, retired people or others who need some part-time income. They do a really outstanding job and provide a great community service in helping keep our school children safe, and H. Res. 498 will help promote and improve that safety even further.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this resolution.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues, Mr. MARCHANT of Texas and as well as Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, and urge a favorable vote of passage of the School Bus Safety Week. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the adoption of H. Res. 498, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 498.

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. MARCHANT. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CAPTAIN GEORGE A. WOOD POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4962) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Pitcher Street in Utica, New York, as the ''Captain George A. Wood Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4962

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

SECTION 1. CAPTAIN GEORGE A. WOOD POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Pitcher Street in Utica, New York, shall be known and designated as the ''Captain George A. Wood 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 ''Captain George A. Wood Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam 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.

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

There was no objection.

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

Captain George A. Wood of New York was killed on November 20, 2003, while fighting the war on terror in Iraq. Wood was on patrol when his tank rolled over an improvised explosive device. At the time, he was assigned to B Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, based out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Growing up in New York's Mohawk Valley, Wood was a football and track star at Notre Dame Junior Senior High School in Utica, New York. He later went on to earn his degree from Cornell and completed his postgraduate work at both New York State University Colleges at Albany and Cortland. His lifelong dream was to teach history and coach football at West Point.

Captain Wood leaves behind his wife and daughter and many lifelong friends. His friends will always reminisce about his wonderful storytelling ability and his goodheartedness that was transparent in everything that he did.

I would urge all the Members to come together to honor Captain George Wood by passing H.R. 4962.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

As a member of the Government Reform Committee, I am pleased to join my colleague Representative MARCHANT in support of H.R. 4962, legislation sponsored by Representative BOEHLERT which names a post office in Utica, New York, after Captain George A. Wood. H.R. 4962, which was cosponsored by the entire New York delegation, was unanimously approved by the Government Reform Committee on June 29, 2006.

George A. Wood, a native New Yorker, was by all accounts a stellar person. A graduate of Notre Dame Junior Senior High School in Utica, George was a high school track and football star. After high school, he graduated from Cornell University and went on to earn master's degrees from New York State University Colleges at Albany and Cortland.

A history buff who was fascinated with military history, George joined the military and was assigned to B company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division based in Fort Hood, Texas.

Sadly, at age 33, Captain Wood was killed while on patrol in Baqubah, Iraq, on November 20, 2003, when his tank rolled over an improvised explosive device. Captain Wood is survived by his wife Lisa and daughter Maria.

Mr. Speaker, it is always difficult to learn of a soldier's death, but I commend my colleague for seeking to honor the legacy, sacrifice and accomplishments of Captain Wood by designating the Utica post office in his name. I note that Captain Wood's father and grandfather were postal employees at the Utica facility. How fitting.

Madam Speaker, I urge the swift passage of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. BOEHLERT).

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

Mr. BOEHLERT. Madam Speaker, today we have the privilege of honoring our fallen hero, U.S. Army Captain George A. Wood. The bill before us would rename the Pitcher Street Post Office in Utica, New York, the George A. Wood Post Office Building, which is a fitting tribute to a man who paid the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedom and our security.

Captain Wood bravely served our Nation in Iraq where he met an untimely death on November 20, 2003. However, his memory will live on. Every day, Captain Wood will be in the hearts of his family and his friends and his classmates and his comrades and our neighbors by virtue of the naming of this

public facility, this Federal facility in his honor.

He is survived by his wife Lisa and his 6-year-old daughter Maria, and to them we send the Nation's condolences on your great loss of yesteryear and our optimism on a more promising future because of what the Captain Woods do so often for so many.

Captain Wood was born and raised in upstate New York's beautiful Mohawk Valley. He was an accomplished athlete at Notre Dame Junior Senior High School, and if you are from our neck of the woods, you know those teams are just dynamite. He excelled at both football and track and field.

He was also, and this is very important, a superstar in the classroom. He graduated not just from Cornell University but later earned master's degrees from both the State University at New York in Albany and State University at New York in Cortland.

In the Armed Services, Captain Wood served for 8 years in the 4th Infantry Division in Fort Hood, Texas, and there he became fascinated with the history of our great military. As a matter of fact, Captain Wood dreamed of teaching history and coaching football at the West Point Military Academy. Had he not paid the ultimate price for our way of life, I am confident that he would have seen this dream become a reality.

Captain Wood's discipline, his love of learning and his fine character have made him a model citizen for all of his countrymen and generations to come, a true role model, a genuine American hero.

Both Captain Wood's father and his granddad worked at the Pitcher Street Post Office, so there is a special affinity for the post office in the Wood family, and it would be our utmost pleasure and distinct honor to designate the facility at Utica, New York, as the Captain George A. Wood Post Office Building in honor of a true American hero.

I want to thank my colleagues in the majority and the minority and on the committee for dealing with this very important issue. Oftentimes, as we deal with the major issues that affect so many people around the world, we sometimes neglect the littler things, but they are equally important. They are very personal. They have real meaning for so many, and I thank my colleagues for their support and their cooperation. I urge all of my colleagues to proudly vote ''aye'' for this measure.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I urge the swift passage of this bill. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to support the passage of H.R. 4962, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4962.

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.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A SALVORDAN-AMERICAN DAY

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 721) supporting the goals and ideals of a Salvadoran-American Day (El Dia del Salvadoreno) in recognition of all Salvadoran-Americans for their hard work, dedication, and contribution to the stability and well-being of the United States.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 721

Whereas the aftermath of 40 years of internal political turmoil forced hundreds of thousands of individuals in the Republic of El Salvador to flee that country and seek peace and security in a new country, the United States;

Whereas Salvadoran-Americans constitute a significantly growing population in the United States, with the majority living in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, and various other areas in the United States;

Whereas the history of the United States is a rich and enduring tapestry woven with the threads of many remarkable lives, cultures, and events, and the lives, work, and artistry of Salvadoran-Americans have added strength, vitality, and purpose to that tapestry;

Whereas the maturing Salvadoran-American community continues to make great economic and cultural contributions to daily life in the United States;

Whereas many of these Salvadoran-Americans actively participate in the United States educational system, further promoting their sense of American pride within communities in this country;

Whereas Salvadoran-American families should have an established day to acknowledge the contribution and value of their culture to the United States;

Whereas the strength of the Salvadoran-American culture can be preserved and passed on to future generations;

Whereas Salvadoran-American families, communities, and generations that follow are committed to maintain both Salvadoran and American cultures, while promoting cultural interchange;

Whereas free of prejudices and as proud men and women, Salvadoran-Americans participate and contribute to the social, educational, professional, and political systems of the United States;

Whereas Salvadoran-American individuals, families, organizations, and communities in cities and States across the Nation wish to share the establishment of a nationally recognized and celebrated Salvadoran-American Day (El Dia del Salvadoreño), beginning on August 6, 2005, and to be celebrated by all generations that follow;

Whereas on August 6, 1525, the official founding of Villa De San Salvador was declared in the Valle de las Hamacas (Valley of the Hammocks) where the indigenous ancestors of El Salvador fought historic battles against the submission and abuse of Spanish colonialism in order to preserve the life and liberty of the Cuscatleco population; and

Whereas August 6 is a day of recognition for Salvadoran-Americans to celebrate throughout the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives supports the goals and ideals of a Salvadoran-American Day (El Dia del Salvadoreño) in recognition of all Salvadoran-Americans for their hard work, dedication, and contribution to the stability and well-being of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 721 offered by the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS). This resolution would support the goals and ideals of a Salvadoran American Day.

Currently, thousands of Salvadoran Americans reside in the United States, mostly within California, the Washington, D.C. area, and New York. August 6 marks the date of the celebration of Fiestas Agostinas, an observance that dates back to 1525, paying homage to the cultural festivities of El Salvador, and is widely observed by the Latino community in the United States.

This day has grown in significance over the years as the Salvadoran-American community has matured and adapted the holiday to fit the lives of Salvadorans living in the United States. Living in a country built by offerings from many cultures and nationalities, Salvadorans have brought forth many economic and cultural contributions to weave into the American fabric.

I urge all Members to come together to pay homage to many Salvadoran Americans that are thriving in our society today by adopting H. Res. 721.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, 40 years of political turmoil forced many individuals from the Republic of El Salvador to flee the country in search of peace and security in the U.S. Currently, there are over 900,000 Salvadoran Americans living in the U.S. The majority of them have found new homes in California, New York, and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

The history of the U.S. is a rich and enduring tapestry woven with the threads of many remarkable lives, cultures and events. The lives, work, and

artistry of Salvadoran Americans have added strength, vitality and purpose to that tapestry.

The Salvadoran-American community continues to make great economic and cultural contribution to the United States. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 721.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I have no other speakers at this moment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS), my colleague.

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Missouri and obviously the Members of this very important committee that helped to pass this resolution.

Madam Speaker, today, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 721, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of the Salvadoran American Day, el dia del Salvadoreno. I would like to thank Chairman DAVIS and Ranking Member WAXMAN for their support in bringing the resolution to the floor today.

This resolution recognizes the Salvadoran Americans for their hard work, dedication and contributions to our stability and well-being of the United States.

Forty years of internal political turmoil forced thousands and thousands of individuals from the Republic of El Salvadore to flee and come to this country. They sought peace and security and a better life in the United States.

□ 1515

Madam Speaker, my mother was born in Central America, in Nicaragua, and immigrated to the United States to seek a better life. As the only Member of Congress of Central American descent, I am honored to recognize Salvadoran Americans and Salvadoran American Day.

Currently, there are over 900,000 Salvadorans living in the U.S. The majority live in Washington, D.C., New York, California and Miami. In the Los Angeles metropolitan area alone, parts of the district that I represent, there are nearly 300,000 Salvadoran Americans.

This celebration of Salvadoran tradition dates back to August 6, 1525, almost five centuries ago, when the city of Villa De San Salvador was founded. El Dia del Salvadoreno marks the culmination of a week-long celebration ''Fiestas Agostinas'' and is arguably the most important civic-religious celebration in El Salvador. The celebration pays homage to the cultural festivities of El Salvador, while recognizing that Salvadorans have adapted themselves to life in the United States.

Celebrated by Salvadoran Americans in California and throughout the country, this day has grown in significance over the years. Back in 2001, the city of Los Angeles honored Salvadoran American Day, and in 2002 Salvadoran American Day was declared as a statewide event in California. More than 100,000 Salvadorans participated in these celebrations in 2005, and we know and expect we will see more this coming August.

I am proud that Congress is helping to recognize and honor this day. Salvadoran American Day contributes to a positive image for Salvadorans, as well as improving a better understanding between our diverse communities and this part of America.

I would like to recognize and thank the Salvadoran American National Association, known as SANA, the SHARE Foundation, and all of the Salvadoran American and Central American organizations for their support and their work to provide for this resolution.

Let us not forget that our Nation was built by the people from many nations and different backgrounds and cultures. In fact, many of the workers who helped rebuild the Pentagon were of Salvadoran background. They love this country. I urge my colleagues to recognize the Salvadoran Americans and pass this resolution.

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

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I certainly would like to thank the gentleman from Missouri for offering me this opportunity to say a few words in support of this resolution.

I certainly want to extend my commendation to the gentlewoman from California for being the chief sponsor of this bill, and I regret to say I should have been an original cosponsor, and I want to be on record that I want to be on as an original cosponsor of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, August 6, 1525 means a lot to the Salvadoran Americans in our country. As the gentlewoman from California said earlier, we almost have a million fellow Americans whose ancestry is from El Salvador.

On August 6, 1525, the official founding of Villa De San Salvador was declared in the Valle de las Hamacas, or the Valley of the Hammocks, where the indigenous ancestors of El Salvador fought historic battles against the submission and abuse of Spanish colonialism in order to preserve the life and liberty of the Cuscatleco population.

This is very significant and important, Madam Speaker, and I certainly want to say that we truly are a Nation of immigrants. Whether you be from South America, and even if you are from Ireland, we can never forget the problems there, the people starving to death, and there was the Irish potato.

Madam Speaker, I don't know why you call it the Irish potato; potato came from America, and that is what saved millions of our fellow Irish people coming over here to this country.

The interesting thing about it, too, is I have been to Central America and I have been to El Salvador, and I say that for good reason, millions of these people coming from Latin America come to this country why? Because they love freedom, they seek opportunity for jobs, and want the best America has to offer. What's wrong with that?

I think this resolution signifies the importance that we should recognize not only the presence of our fellow Salvadoran Americans, but also the contributions that they made to this great country.

Again, I commend the gentlewoman from California for proposing this resolution and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 721, legislation introduced by Congresswoman HILDA L. SOLIS that I am proud to have cosponsored. H. Res. 721 supports the goals and ideals of a Salvadoran-American Day (El Día del Salvadoreño).

Currently, there are more than 900,000 Salvadoran Americans living in the United States, with the majority of them living in California, the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, and New York. In the Los Angeles metropolitan area alone there are nearly 400,000 Salvadoran-Americans.

Today, El Día del Salvadoreño is celebrated among the Latino community in California. This celebration of Salvadoran traditions dates back to 1525 when the city of Villa De San Salvador was founded.

The history of the United States is a rich and enduring tapestry woven with the threads of many remarkable cultures and events, and the lives, work, and artistry of Salvadoran-Americans have added strength, vitality, and purpose to that tapestry.

As a former Peace Corp volunteer in El Salvador, I experienced first hand the culture, hard work and dedication of the people. I commend Salvadoran-Americans for their resilience and contribution to the stability and well-being of the United States. I also thank the estimated 800 Salvadoran nationals who are currently serving in the U.S. military for their efforts on behalf of the security of our country.

The Salvadoran-American community continues to make great economic and cultural contributions to daily life in the United States, and I am proud to support H. Res. 721 and the goals and ideals of Salvadoran-American Day.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in firm support of H. Res. 721, which supports the goals and ideals of a Salvadorian-American Day (El Dia del Salvadoren) in recognition of all Salvadoran-Americans for their hard work, dedication, and contribution to the stability and well-being of the United States.

Salvadorans form an integral part of our communities and our labor force. My district in Northern Virginia, for example, is home to many hard-working Salvadorans who pay taxes and consume U.S. products. Salvadorans also play an important role in the economy of their native country by sending billions of dollars in payments to their families in Central America every year. The remittances that

these individuals send to their families are a large source of revenue, which the United States could not match in foreign aid. As a result, after suffering through a string of brutal civil wars, El Salvador now has a moderate, democratically-elected government.

Madam Speaker, in closing it is all too easy to overlook the important and daily contributions that Salvadorian Americans have made not just to Northern Virginia, but to our Nation as a whole. This bill provides much needed and deserved recognition to the Salvadorian American community for the indelible mark they have made upon the diversity and prominence of our great nation. I urge an "aye" vote.

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 721, supporting the goals and ideals of Salvadoran American Day, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I urge Members to support H. Res. 721, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 721.

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.

CONGRATULATING ITALY ON WINNING THE 2006 WORLD CUP

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 908) congratulating Italy on winning the 2006 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 908

Whereas for the first time in 24 years, the Italian National Soccer Team won the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup;

Whereas Italy is one of the most successful countries in World Cup history, reaching the finals 6 times and winning 4 championships, in 1934, 1938, 1982, and 2006;

Whereas the 2006 championship is due in large part to the extraordinary leadership of head coach Marcello Lippi and team Captain Fabio Cannavaro;

Whereas in 2006, team Italy (known as "Azzurri" or simply "the Blue") went undefeated in World Cup play and won the final game in only the second World Cup Championship to be determined by shoot-out;

Whereas in winning the World Cup, the Italian National Soccer Team faced adversity and overcame setbacks;

Whereas the vibrant culture and heritage of Italy were brought to our Nation by millions of Italian immigrants;

Whereas Italian Americans have made significant contributions to our Nation in all fields of endeavor;

Whereas Italian Americans rejoiced in the victory of the soccer team of their ancestral homeland, many spontaneously celebrating in American neighborhoods throughout our Nation;

Whereas all Americans can take pride in the knowledge that the United States National Soccer Team was the only team that Italy was unable to defeat during this World Cup, needing to settle with a 1–1 tie; and

Whereas the fans of the Italian National Soccer team, many hailing from the United States, represent some of the most enthusiastic in the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates Italy and the Italian National Soccer team on winning the 2006 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to request my colleagues' support for H. Res. 908, a resolution congratulating Italy on winning the 2006 Federation Internationale de Football Association, or FIFA, World Cup.

On July 9, 2006 the Italian team, known affectionately in Italy as Azzurri, or "The Blue," secured its place as one of the most successful teams in World Cup history, having reached the finals six times and having just won its championship.

Under the leadership of Coach Marcello Lippi and Captain Fabio Cannavaro, the Italian team went undefeated in World Cup play. I must point out in a bit of national pride that the only team Italy was unable to defeat was our very own United States National Team, with whom Italy tied 1–1.

The Italian championship at the FIFA World Cup highlights the vibrant culture and the heritage of Italy, the same vibrant culture and heritage brought to America by millions of Italian immigrants that has enriched and continues to enrich our great Nation through countless contributions to every aspect of our society.

This is a proud heritage that is shared by millions of Italian Americans, and a pride which extends to the Italian National World Cup team. Countless Americans throughout the United States rejoiced at Italy's success, and it is with a hearty "bene fatto" that I extend congratulations to Italy and to the Italian International Soccer team on winning the 2006 FIFA World Cup. I urge my colleagues to do likewise by agreeing to this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for the management of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, just over a week ago I had the tremendous pleasure of watching the thrilling finale of the World Cup championship match in Germany. As the winning penalty kick zipped past the French goalkeeper, I felt the joy of millions of Italians as they celebrated their historic fourth World Cup victory. For that matter, the entire planet with billions of people witnessing this special event, the number one sport in the world, not American football, I beg to say, Madam Speaker.

The Italians are known for the passion they exhibit in every endeavor they undertake. I cannot agree more with that. Whether it is in art, literature, mathematics, business or especially soccer, Italians all over the world pour their heart and soul into every task they assume.

Madam Speaker, this passion has led great men like Christopher Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci, Constantino Brumidi, Enrico Fermi and captains of industry A.P. Giannini, to contribute to the rock-solid foundation on which this country is built. Not to mention some of my favorite singers, Mario Lanza, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Perry Como, and the list goes on. This passion has also contributed mightily to the strong alliance between Italy and the United States since the end of World War II. Our bond with Italy kept the Soviet menace at bay during the decades of the Cold War.

Today, Italy aids in the fight for democracy. Our Italian allies fight, bleed, and even die to bring democracy to the people of Afghanistan and Iraq.

This passion was unabashedly unleashed in the worldwide celebrations following the Italian national soccer team's historic victory in Germany. I, for one, reveled in the images of our Italian friends singing and dancing around the world.

In all this praise for Italy and its fantastic soccer team, I would like to congratulate the fans who traveled to Germany to support their beloved Azzurri, as the national soccer team is known. During the month-long tournament, the fans were a model of civility and good spirits.

Madam Speaker, the Italian fans, along with those from 31 other nations, enjoyed the beautiful country of Germany and all of its 64 thrilling soccer matches without any major incidents.

Finally, I would like to commend those involved with the security of the World Cup tournament. As we all know, this kind of world gathering, unfortunately, presents potential terrorist opportunities as well as other

dangers. The German Government and security officials performed magnificently, the venues were safe, and the atmosphere always enjoyable.

This was an exciting month, capped off with an unforgettable ending for our longtime friends and allies, the Italian people. I strongly support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), the original sponsor of this resolution.

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

Mr. FOSSELLA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

As mentioned, last week with approximately a billion people watching, for the first time in 24 years, the Italian National Soccer Team won the Federation Internationale de Football Association World Cup. It was indeed a great day for the people of Italy. I know they celebrated with pride and enthusiasm, and they probably still are, and rightfully so.

But it was also a very important and poignant day for many Americans of Italian descent. While I, like many here, rooted for the American team, and I tip my hat to the U.S.A. team that tied the Italian soccer team, they should be very proud for trying and giving their best and representing our Nation well in Germany.

But no question, Italy's victory captivated the world and showed that teamwork is the key to success.

It was wonderful to watch the game across Staten Island and Brooklyn, whether it was the Dyker Heights section of Brooklyn, and I spent much of the day in Bensonhurst along 18th Avenue. I stopped into many of the clubs and restaurants, and literally televisions were in the middle of the street as people poured out to watch their favorite players and cheer. There were thousands celebrating into the night as well.

During the game, we were proud to watch Italy play with a passion, overcoming every challenge to go undefeated in the tournament and walk away the champions.

Team Italy, known as Azzurri, or simply ''The Blue'' went undefeated in World Cup play and won the final game in only the second World Cup championship to be determined by a shootout.

That makes Italy the second most successful country in World Cup history, winning four championships in 1934, 1938, 1982 and 2006. But fate rested on the side of Italy this year, and despite strong competition of many countries, Italy was the victor.

I am delighted to have introduced this resolution to recognize Azzurri and extend our praise to its coach, Marcello Lippi, and the entire team. I would like to thank Chairman HYDE, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Ranking Member LANTOS. And also, finally, I know this has been a great relationship, which has just been mentioned, between Italy and the United States. The role that Italy has played is often taken for granted. It is one of our largest trading partners.

□ 1530

It is a nation that embraces Western values, that celebrates and cherishes freedom and individual liberty and has been an especially strong supporter of our country in the last several years as we engage in the war on terror.

There is no question that we have a tremendous bond with the Italian people and that it serves our interests as well as theirs. There is no question that there are many Americans of Italian descent who have made this country the greatest in the history of the world. From the art, the literature, the law, politics, music, you name it, there have been contributions from Americans of Italian descent.

And I would say, finally, if you had a visual of driving around at least Brooklyn on that day to see the American flag waving so proudly outside people's houses and on their door steps, and next to it the Italian flag, I think it represents the strong alliance and unbelievable embrace that Americans of Italian descent love this country, respect their heritage, and on that day, Italy proved to the world that teamwork and pride works. No, ifs, ands, or head butts.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I just have a couple of minutes and I want to yield to myself to again commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for offering this legislation.

We have a long way to go as far as the sport of soccer is concerned. I just wish that maybe if it wasn't so much into American football, our Nation could concentrate and focus on the fact that this is the number one sport in the world. And I am sure that if we turn our resources, our technology, our know-how into becoming competent and being really proactive in this support, maybe our own country could also be favored to be among the top players in this sport.

It was interesting to note, Madam Speaker, that all the expectations were supposed to be on Brazil, and the great player Renaldo was supposed to give Brazil another World Cup. And then even Argentina was supposed to focus on this. But never was there any expectation that teams from Europe would dominate as they did, where Italy has now won this great sport.

Madam Speaker, I did have the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) to come and also make a presentation, but unfortunately he is tied up with other meetings, but I am sure that he will have a separate statement to be submitted to be made part of the RECORD.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Italy on winning the 2006 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup. Throughout the competition Italy exhibited great sportsmanship and competitive skill that carried them through to the final round. Billions of soccer fans across he globe had the opportunity to follow Italy as the team progressed to become one of the most successful countries in World Cup history.

Under the extraordinary leadership of head coach Marcello Lippi and team Captain Fabio Cannavaro, Italy was able to win the championship for the fourth time in World Cup history. Some of the most enthusiastic fans of Italy hailed from the United States and were able to support their favorite team. Italy's victory was especially exciting for the millions of Italian Americans who proudly value Italian culture and heritage.

I would like to commend Congressman FOSSELLA for introducing H. Res. 908 to honor Italy's great athletic accomplishment. By participating in the FIFA World Cup, Italy was able to partake in an excellent forum for the development of international friendship and relationships.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 908, which congratulates the Italian national soccer team for their 2006 FIFA World Cup championship. The World Cup is a true testament of nations of the world putting aside their differences to come together in competition and athletic excellence.

Following Fabio Grosso's goal in penalty kicks sealing the Italian victory, people around the globe joined the people of Rome, Naples, and Milan in celebration of Italy's return to World Cup glory. Even back in my district, Italian Americans took to the streets of Franklin Avenue in the south end of Hartford with Italian flags, jerseys, face paint, and smiles in jubilation of the Italian victory.

I join my fellow colleagues, those back in my district, and Italians around the world in congratulating the Italian national soccer team on their undefeated tournament run and their incredible achievement of the Italian nation's fourth World Cup victory.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I also have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 908, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING KAZAKHSTAN ON 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF CLOSURE OF WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST NUCLEAR TEST SITE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 905) congratulating Kazakhstan on the 15th

anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan and for its efforts on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 905

Whereas on August 29, 1991, the Government of Kazakhstan shut down the world's second largest nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of the Republic of Kazakhstan;

Whereas between 1945 and 1991, more than 450 nuclear tests were conducted at this site, exposing more than 1.5 million innocent people to radiation and causing damage to the environment;

Whereas the damage to the environment and to the health of the people of Kazakhstan from this terrible legacy of hundreds of detonations of Soviet nuclear explosive devices could be felt for decades to come;

Whereas upon gaining independence, Kazakhstan inherited from the former Soviet Union more than 1,000 nuclear warheads, as well as a squadron of 40 TU–95 heavy bombers armed with 370 nuclear warheads, comprising the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal;

Whereas Kazakhstan renounced this massive nuclear arsenal, unilaterally disarmed, and joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state, the first time a state that had possessed such a massive nuclear arsenal had done so;

Whereas Kazakhstan's leadership and cooperation with the United States on nonproliferation matters is a model for other countries to follow;

Whereas Kazakhstan also inherited from the former Soviet Union the world's largest anthrax production and weaponization facility, which had a capacity to produce more than 300 metric tons of anthrax per year;

Whereas Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the United States Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program, dismantled the military-related buildings and equipment associated with the anthrax production and weaponization facility;

Whereas the Government of Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the United States, participated in a very successful secret operation code-named ''Project Sapphire,'' in which 581 kilograms (1,278 pounds) of weapons-grade highly enriched uranium, enough to produce 20 to 25 nuclear warheads, were removed overnight from Kazakhstan;

Whereas in December 2004 and May 2006, Kazakhstan and the United States concluded amendments to a bilateral agreement on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which have moved the two countries toward a new level of cooperation in preventing the threat of bio-terrorism; and

Whereas in February 2006, Kazakhstan and the Nuclear Threat Initiative of Washington, D.C., with the support of the United States Department of Energy, blended down 2,900 kilograms (6,600 pounds) of weapons-usable highly enriched uranium, enough to produce up to 25 nuclear warheads, converting the material for peaceful use and preventing it from falling into the hands of terrorist organizations and being used in weapons production: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people and Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan;

(2) commends Kazakhstan for greatly advancing the cause of the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction as a result of its dismantlement of its nuclear and biological weapons and facilities; and

(3) calls upon the Administration to establish a joint working group with the Government of Kazakhstan to assist in assessing the environmental damage and health effects caused by nuclear testing in the Semipalatinsk region by the former Soviet Union.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of House Resolution 905, congratulating Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site, and for its efforts on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Kazakhstan was once home to the second largest nuclear test site in the world. From the years of 1945 to 1991, over 450 tests were carried out at that site.

After becoming independent from the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was left with more than 1,000 nuclear warheads and with 40 heavy bombers armed with 370 nuclear warheads and comprising the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal.

Immediately after achieving its independence, Kazakhstan successfully closed and secured its enormous nuclear test site.

Kazakhstan accepted support from the U.S. Department of Energy and readily complied with the nuclear threat initiative, blending down over 6,000 pounds of weapons grade highly enriched uranium.

Given the threats that we are facing from rogue states such as Iran, which has blatantly violated its nuclear nonproliferation obligations and which refuses to immediately stop its nuclear-related and weapons-related activities, we welcome the opportunity to stand here today commemorating Kazakhstan's landmark decision.

In addition to inheriting a massive nuclear arsenal from the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was also left with the world's largest anthrax production and weaponizing facility.

Through cooperation with the United States Cooperative Threat Reduction program, CTR, Kazakhstan was able to successfully dismantle the military-related buildings and equipment related to such anthrax programs.

I ask my colleagues to support this important resolution and, in so doing, join us in commending the people and the government of Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site and for greatly advancing global nonproliferation efforts by dismantling its nuclear and biological weapons and facilities.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, again I want to thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), especially in her capacity as chairperson of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and especially my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN), who is our ranking member of the subcommittee. I certainly want to thank also Chairman HENRY HYDE and Mr. TOM LANTOS, our senior ranking member of the House International Relations Committee. Without their support, Madam Speaker, House Resolution 905 would not be possible. And I really, really appreciate their help and assistance in providing this resolution now before the floor.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 905, congratulating Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan, and for its efforts on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

House Resolution 905 is historic for these reasons, Madam Speaker. It is historic because this is the first time the U.S. House of Representatives has considered legislation in praise of Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic that has proved to be a true ally of the United States.

It is also historic because it is being considered on the 60th birthday of my dear friend and brother, I consider my brother, the Honorable Kanat Saudabayev, the Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United States. Ambassador Saudabayev has worked tirelessly to represent the interests of Kazakhstan in the United States and has served His Excellency, Mr. Sursultan Nazarbayev, the President of Kazakhstan, with distinction and honor.

Ambassador Saudabayev and his wife and children and grandchildren are with us. It is my privilege to wish him a happy birthday and commend him for his service to his nation and certainly to the United States as well.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 905 recognizes Kazakhstan as a model for advancing the cause of nuclear nonproliferation. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan inherited a ruined economy and became

overnight the world's fourth largest recipient and supplier of nuclear weapons.

This arsenal of nuclear weapons could possibly have helped to resolve the financial problems of this young and struggling nation. However, under the leadership of President Nazarbayev, the people of Kazakhstan, knowing firsthand the horrible effects of nuclear tests, made a choice to renounce nuclear weapons all together. In fact, immediately after achieving independence, and in spite of threats from the Kremlin, President Nazarbayev closed and sealed the world's second largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, where the Soviet Union conducted almost 500 nuclear tests from 1949 to 1991.

Our Nation assisted President Nazarbayev to dismantle these nuclear weapons through the leadership of former Senator Sam Nunn and Chairman RICHARD LUGAR, with the enactment of the Nunn-Lugar Act that provided the necessary funds to carry out the elimination of these nuclear weapons.

Madam Speaker, today few know about President Nazarbayev's heroic decision which, in my humble opinion, changed the course of modern history. Few know that this story about Kazakhstan did not bargain and did not lobby to gain political or economic dividends from its choice. Rather, Kazakhstan, for the sake of global peace and security, consciously chose to ensure a brighter future for their children and for the rest of the world.

Can you believe a Muslim country having in its possession all these nuclear weapons that President Nazarbayev could have easily doled out, sold them, and made it such that it could have been a very, very dangerous situation for the world.

I believe we should speak out more often of Kazakhstan's example, Madam Speaker. While I am grateful that the world is aware of the Chernobyl disaster, where several thousands perished, I am saddened that the world knows so little about the tragedies of Semipalatinsk, the Marshall Islands and French Polynesia, where children and elderly have gone dying for decades as a result of Cold War policies and also being directly affected because of nuclear contamination.

At Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, the cumulative power of explosions from nuclear tests conducted by the former Soviet Union is believed to be equal to the power of 2,500 explosions of the type of bombs dropped in Hiroshima, Japan in 1945. More than 1.5 million people of Kazakhstan suffered from nuclear contamination as a result of these tests, and a horrifying array of diseases will continue to destroy the lives of these good people.

Madam Speaker, as a Pacific Islander, I have a tremendous affinity to the people of Kazakhstan because the Marshallese and the Polynesian Tahitians also know firsthand the horrors of nuclear testing. Bikini is one of 29 atolls and five islands that compose the Marshall Islands. These atolls are located north of the equator and are scattered over some 357,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean. Because of their location away from regular air and sea routes, these atolls were chosen by our government to be the nuclear proving grounds for the United States.

From 1946 to 1958 the United States detonated 67 nuclear weapons at the Marshall Islands, which included the first hydrogen bomb explosion of what is known as the Bravo shot, a 15 megaton shot, which is equivalent to 1,000 times more powerful than the bombs we dropped on Nagasaki, Hiroshima. Acknowledged as the greatest nuclear explosion ever detonated by the United States, the Bravo shot vaporized six islands, and created a mushroom cloud 25 miles up in the atmosphere. It has been said that if one were to calculate the net yield of the tests conducted in the Marshall Islands, it would be equivalent to the detonation of 1.7 Hiroshima nuclear bombs every day for 12 years.

The U.S. nuclear testing program exposed the people of the Marshall Islands to severe health problems and genetic abnormalities for generations. The U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands also set a precedent for France to use the islands of the Pacific for its own testing program. For some 30 years the French Government detonated approximately 218 nuclear bombs on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls near Tahiti.

In 1995, while the world turned a blind eye, the newly elected President, Jacques Chirac, announced that France would violate the 1992 world moratorium on nuclear testing and exploded eight more nuclear bombs on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls beginning in September 1995.

Chirac said the nuclear explosions would have no ecological consequences. Give me a break. They described his decision as irrevocable. And what is known about this is that we even told France, you don't need to explode any more nuclear bombs. You can do it electronically. Despite all of this, still couldn't do it.

I also made an irrevocable decision to accompany Mr. Oscar Temaru, the current President of French Polynesia on the Greenpeace warrior vessel which took us to Moruroa as part of some 20,000 demonstrators who came from Europe, from Japan, from the United States, from New Zealand, Australia and elsewhere to protest President's Chirac's decision to break France's commitment to a moratorium not to conduct any more nuclear tests.

□ 1545

Later I personally visited Moruroa under the supervision of the French Government, and to this day portions of that atoll is still contaminated.

Madam Speaker, in 2003, as a direct result of my friendship with the good Ambassador from Kazakhstan, I became aware of the magnitude of the problem of Semipalatinsk. In August, 2004, I felt a deep sense of obligation as a Member of Congress who had visited the nuclear test sites in the Marshall Islands and in French Polynesia and also now to the Semipalatinsk test site. During my visit and in later discussions with President Nazarbayev, I learned that I was the first American legislator to set foot on ground zero where the Soviet Union exploded its first nuclear device in 1949. And guess what, Madam Speaker? It is still contaminated to this day.

Madam Speaker, considering the courageous decision made by President Nazarbayev to shut down the Semipalatinsk test site so that you and I and future generations may live in peace, I believe we have a moral responsibility to bear the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Semipalatinsk. This is why I am pleased that this House resolution calls upon the administration to establish a joint working group with the Government of Kazakhstan to assist in assessing the environmental damage and health effects caused by nuclear testing in the Semipalatinsk region by the former Soviet Union.

As important as this resolution is, Madam Speaker, I also believe the international community should more fully acknowledge Kazakhstan's tremendous contribution to world peace. While I am pleased this year's Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the United Nations director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the IAEA, I believe President Nazarbayev, Senator RICHARD LUGAR, and Senator Sam Nunn should also be seriously considered for the Nobel Peace Prize for reaffirming the worth and advancing the rights of human beings around the world and by dismantling the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal, closing and sealing the Semipalatinsk test site, and most recently blending down 6,600 pounds of weapons-usable highly enriched uranium, or enough to produce up to 25 nuclear warheads, converting the material for peaceful use and thereby preventing it from falling into the hands of terrorist organizations.

I submit, Madam Speaker, these are some of the achievements that President Nazarbayev and Senator LUGAR and Senator Nunn have made, and they certainly should be recognized by leaders of our world community.

I want to share with my colleagues the substance of the paper that was delivered by my good friend, Ambassador Saudabayev, concerning what happened in Kazakhstan. And I quote:

''The people of Kazakhstan have experienced firsthand the devastating force of nuclear weapons. During four decades, the Soviet Union conducted 456 nuclear explosions at the world's largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk. The cumulative power output of these explosions equaled 2,500

Hiroshima-size bombs. More than 1.5 million Kazaks were exposed.

''That is, Kazakhstan made the unprecedented step in the history of the world and became the first country to shut down a nuclear test site and renounce the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal. At that time this arsenal was larger than the nuclear weapons stockpiles of Great Britain, France, and China combined. Kazakhstan had 1,040 nuclear warheads for intercontinental ballistic missiles SS–18 and 370 nuclear warheads for cruise missiles and 40 strategic multipurpose bombers TU–95 to deliver them.''

The point I wanted to make about the Ambassador's statement, Madam Speaker, is that Kazakhstan is no longer involved in this madness of developing as well as holding on to nuclear weapons.

With the recent announcement of our need to establish a global initiative to combat nuclear terrorism and on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, it is only fitting and fair that we should acknowledge Kazakhstan's commitment and leadership in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. For this reason I urge my colleagues to support the House Resolution 905.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. H. Res. 905 congratulates Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan and for its efforts on the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

H. Res. 905 is non-controversial and historic. It is historic because this is the first time the U.S. House of Representatives has considered legislation in praise of Kazakhstan, a former Soviet Republic that has proved to be a true ally of the U.S.

It is also historic because it is being considered on the 60th birthday of my friend and brother, His Excellency Kanat Saudabayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Ambassador Saudabayev has worked tirelessly to represent the interests of Kazakhstan in the U.S. and has served his President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, with distinction and honor and, today, it is my privilege to wish him a happy birthday and commend him for his service to his nation and ours.

Also, at this time, I thank Chairman HENRY HYDE and Ranking Member TOM LANTOS of the International Relations Committee for their support in moving this important legislation forward. I also thank Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and Congressman GARY ACKERMAN, Chair and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, for cosponsoring this legislation. Without their support, H. Res. 905 would not be possible.

H. Res. 905 recognizes Kazakhstan as a model for advancing the cause of nuclear nonproliferation. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan inherited a ruined economy and the World's fourth largest nuclear arsenal. This arsenal could possibly have helped to resolve the financial problems of this young and struggling nation.

However, led by President Nazarbayev, the people of Kazakhstan, knowing firsthand the horrible effects of nuclear tests, made a choice to renounce nuclear weapons. In fact, immediately after achieving independence and in spite of threats from the Kremlin, President Nazarbayev closed and sealed the world's second largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk where the Soviet Union conducted more than 450 nuclear tests from 1949 to 1991.

Today, few know about President Nazarbayev's heroic decision which undoubtedly changed the course of modern history. Few know this story because Kazakhstan did not bargain and did not lobby to gain political or economic dividends from its choice. Rather, Kazakhstan, for the sake of global peace and security, consciously chose to ensure a brighter future for their children and ours.

For this reason, I believe we should speak more often of Kazakhstan's example. While I am grateful that the world is aware of the Chernobyl disaster where thousands perished, I am saddened that the world knows so little about the tragedies of Semipalatinsk, the Marshall Islands and French Polynesia where children and the elderly have been dying for decades as a result of Cold War policies that to this day have never been set right.

In Semipalatinsk, the cumulative power of explosions from nuclear tests conducted by the former Soviet Union is believed to be equal to the power of 2,500 explosions of the type of bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan in 1945. More than 1.5 million people in Kazakhstan suffered from nuclear contamination as a result of these tests and a horrifying array of disease will continue to destroy the lives of many more.

As a Pacific Islander, I have a special affinity for the people of Kazakhstan because the Marshallese and Polynesian Tahitians also know firsthand the horrors of nuclear testing. Bikini is one of 29 atolls and five islands that compose the Marshall Islands. These atolls are located north of the equator and are scattered over 357,000 square miles of the Pacific Ocean. Because of their location away from regular air and sea routes, these atolls were chosen to be the nuclear proving ground for the United States.

From 1946 to 1958, the United States detonated 66 nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands including the first hydrogen bomb,or Bravo shot, which was 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. Acknowledged as the greatest nuclear explosion ever detonated by the U.S., the Bravo shot vaporized 6 islands and created a mushroom cloud 25 miles in diameter. It has been said that if one were to calculate the net yield of the tests conducted in the Marshall Islands, it would be equivalent to the detonation of 1.7 Hiroshima nuclear bombs every day for 12 years.

The U.S. nuclear testing program exposed the people of the Marshall Islands to severe health problems and genetic anomalies for generations to come. The U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands also set a precedent for France to use the islands of the Pacific for its own testing program. For some 30 years, the French Government detonated approximately 218 nuclear devices at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in Tahiti. In 1995, while the world turned a blind eye, the newly elected President of France, Jacques Chirac, announced that France would violate the 1992 world moratorium on nuclear testing and explode 8 more nuclear bombs at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls beginning in September 1995. Chirac said that the nuclear explosions would have no ''ecological consequences'' and described his decision a ''irrevocable.''

I also made an irrevocable decision and, in August 1995, accompanied Mr. Oscar Temaru, who is now the President of French Polynesia, on the Green Peace Warrior which took us to Moruroa in protest of President Chirac's decision to break the world moratorium. Later, I personally visited Moruroa under the supervision of the French Government and I remember well the fact that on certain areas of the island, it was off-limits and obviously contaminated and unfit for human occupation. After years of denial, the French Government has finally admitted there are leakages of radioactive materials from these atolls where the nuclear tests were conducted. As a result, some 10,000 Tahitians are believed to be severely exposed to nuclear radiation and the French Government has done little or nothing to properly diagnose or even give medical treatment to the Tahitian workers who were victims of this tragedy.

In 2003, as a direct result of my friendship with Ambassador Saudabayev, I became aware of the magnitude of the problem of Semipalatinsk. In August 2004, I felt a deep sense of obligation as a Member of Congress who had visited the nuclear test sites in the Marshall Islands and Tahiti to also visit the Semipalatinsk test site. During my visit and in later discussions with President Nazarbayev, I learned that I was the first American legislator to set foot on ground zero in Kazakhstan.

Considering the courageous decision made by President Nazarbayev to shut down the Semipalatinsk test site so that you and I and future generations may live in peace, I believe we have a moral responsibility to bear the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Semipalatinsk. This is why I am pleased that H. Res. 905 calls upon the Administration to establish a joint working group with the Government of Kazakhstan to assist in assessing the environmental damage and health effects caused by nuclear testing in the Semipalatinsk region by the former Soviet Union.

As important as this resolution is, I also believe the international community should more fully acknowledge Kazakhstan's contribution to world peace. While I am pleased that this year's Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), I believe President Nazarbayev should also receive the Nobel Peace Prize for reaffirming the worth and advancing the rights of the human person by dismantling the world's 4th largest nuclear arsenal, closing and sealing the Semipalatinsk test site, and most recently blending down 6,600 pounds of weapons-usable highly enriched uranium, or enough to produce up to 25 nuclear warheads, converting the material for peaceful use and thereby preventing it from falling into the hands of terrorist organizations.

I also believe Senator RICHARD LUGAR and former Senator Sam Nunn should likewise be honored for establishing the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program which provides assistance to Russia and the former Soviet republics for securing and destroying their excess nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

With the recent announcement of our need to establish a global initiative to combat nuclear terrorism and on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the closure of the world's second largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, it is only fitting and fair that we should acknowledge Kazakhstan's commitment and leadership in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. For this reason, I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 905 and I thank Minority Leader PELOSI and Majority Leader BOEHNER for bringing this timely resolution to the floor.

Madam Speaker, I gladly yield 5 minutes to my dear friend and colleague from the great State of Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from American Samoa for yielding.

I rise today to congratulate the people and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the 15th anniversary of the closure of the former Soviet nuclear test site within their borders. I am pleased to commend Kazakhstan on its tireless work for nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and I call upon the administration and my colleagues here in Congress to assist Kazakhstan in assessing the environmental damage caused by Soviet testing.

This is a very important and very personal issue to me. I represent southern Nevada, where the United States detonated over 900 nuclear bombs at the Nevada test site in the 1950s and 1960s. Nevadans and residents of surrounding States paid a very heavy price for this testing especially during the above-ground testing years. Environmental contamination and the devastating impact on the health of the people living in this area, living in the southwestern region of the United States of America, were unconscionable and unacceptable and can never be allowed to happen again.

I remember as a kid growing up in Las Vegas, so many of my friends' mothers and fathers worked at the Nevada test site. They would be bussed into the test site during the week. They would be bussed home during the weekend. Little did any of us realize that they were being contaminated as they worked for our government in the attempt and in the thought that they were doing something good and important for national security.

I recall, after being elected to Congress, going to a meeting of all the former Nevada test site workers, at least those that were still alive. There were 200 people in the room when I walked in. We asked that everybody in the room that had been a worker at the test site who had some form of cancer, if they would mind standing and acknowledging that fact. Every single person in that room, all 200 of them, stood up because they were all suffering from a form of cancer.

Radioactive contamination from tests in both Nevada and in Kazakhstan indiscriminately spread across the globe, eventually causing world powers to recognize the terrible health risks, stop atmospheric testing, and finally end all testing. We must prevent a return to nuclear testing, and we must continue to redress the problems that have been caused by testing over the last 60 years and continue to cause environmental and health threats from the United States to the former Soviet Union, Kazakhstan, to the South Pacific, Marshall Islands, and many other places that have been harmed by nuclear testing.

Today is the 60th birthday of my friend and partner in opposing nuclear proliferation, His Excellency Kanat Saudabayev, the Ambassador to the United States from the Republic of Kazakhstan. I do not think it is appropriate to acknowledge the fact that he is in the gallery, but I will be joining him in the gallery to congratulate him on reaching this milestone when I conclude my remarks.

It was my great pleasure in June to cochair, at his suggestion, a public symposium in Las Vegas on the Legacy and Lessons of Nuclear Testing in Kazakhstan and Nevada. Over 100 of my constituents joined me and the Ambassador for this remarkable event, and it was with a strong sense of commitment that I submitted into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the Ambassador's and my joint statement of opposition to nuclear proliferation and our ongoing commitment to working for a safer world.

I salute the Ambassador, his President, and the people of Kazakhstan and look forward to working with them on eliminating the threat of nuclear testing and nuclear weapons proliferation and congratulate them for their very courageous actions.

I wholeheartedly support H. Res. 905. I commend my friend and colleague, the gentleman from American Samoa, for drafting this timely and important resolution, and I strongly urge its passage.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield 5 minutes of our time to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from American Samoa is recognized for 5 additional minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, how much more time do I have on this side?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 8½ minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I want to commend the gentlewoman from Nevada for a most eloquent statement. And nothing pleases me more than to know that one of my colleagues has had personal experience in dealing with nuclear testing.

I must say for the record I am probably one of the few Members who have ever visited the actual nuclear test sites. I have been to French Polynesia. I have been to Moruroa. It is not a very pleasant sight when you see a nuclear explosion like a flower, a beautiful array of colors, but very deadly. I have been to Semipalatinsk, ground zero, where the Soviet Union exploded its first nuclear weapon in 1949. That place is still contaminated. So with 10,000 French Tahitians who were exposed to nuclear contamination, 1.5 million people of Kazakhstan exposed to nuclear contamination, several hundred Marshallese people exposed to nuclear contamination, Madam Speaker, I submit we have a moral obligation to help these people, to assist them with their medical needs. And, unfortunately, I must say my own government has not done a very good job in helping the people of the Marshall Islands, providing the best medical treatment that we can give.

When that 15-megaton hydrogen bomb was exploded, there was no warning given to the people living in Rongelap and Utirik. And guess what? That nuclear cloud that came over as result of the explosion of this hydrogen bomb literally caused some very serious problems. I have talked to some of the women in the Marshall Islands. Five times they have had to have cancer operations of the lymph nodes. And this is just an example of our failure as a government to fulfill our responsibility to what we have done to these people in the Marshall Islands.

And I want to say that I commend also the Government of Kazakhstan and all the efforts that they are making. I visited the hospitals, seen the nuclear victims and, sad to say, the cancer, the results of women not giving birth in normal cycles.

This is very bad, and I sincerely hope that my colleagues and we as a government could be more responsible, especially in our responsibility to the people of the Marshall Islands.

Madam Speaker, I have several documents of a symposium that was conducted December 16, 2003, here in Washington, D.C., and I will include in the RECORD the statement of Ambassador Kanat Saudabayev and a table also indicating the various nuclear explosions that had taken place since we started this madness in 1945 up until 1998.

A realistic comparison to make here: We exploded a 15-megaton bomb. The Soviet Union exploded a 50-megaton hydrogen bomb in 1961, which was 3,333 times more powerful than the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atom bombs that we exploded in Japan. You can just imagine what this means to the 1.5 million Kazaks who were exposed in this terrible, terrible time of our world's history, what the Soviet Union had done to these good people.

Madam Speaker, again I want to thank my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida for her support and management of this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

SYMPOSIUM REMARKS BY KANAT SAUDABAYEV

Hon. Senator Nunn, Congressmen Faleomavaega, Your Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, It is difficult to overestimate the pressing urgency of today's symposium; weapons of mass destruction and the desire by international terrorists to use them have become the most dangerous threat in the world.

The people of Kazakhstan have experienced first-hand the devastating force of nuclear weapons. During four decades, the Soviet Union conducted 456 nuclear explosions at the world's largest nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk. The cumulative power output of these explosions equaled 2,500 Hiroshima-size bombs. More than 1.5 million people suffered from these tests in Kazakhstan, and vast territories became absolutely useless for life.

That is why Kazakhstan made the unprecedented step in the history of the world, and became the first country to shut down a nuclear test site and renounce the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal. At that time this arsenal was larger than the nuclear weapons stockpiles of Great Britain, France and China combined. Kazakhstan had 1,040 nuclear warheads for intercontinental. ballistic missiles (ICBMs) 55–18 and 370 nuclear warheads for cruise missiles, and 40 strategic multipurpose bombers TU–95 to deliver them.

Today, there are no nuclear weapons in Kazakhstan. The infrastructure of the test site has been demolished. This was possible due to close cooperation between our two countries during the past decade under the Nunn-Lugar Program.

It could have been very different. In the early days of independence, there was no shortage of foreign emissaries asking our President to keep the nuclear weapons, saying that you are going to be the first and only Muslim nation with nuclear weapons and that you are going to be respected by the whole world. I must say that a significant portion of Kazakhstan's elite of that time were also in favor of keeping the nuclear arsenal. Today it would be fair to say that our renunciation of nuclear weapons was a courageous choice of historic significance by the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev.

The President convincingly tells the story of what was behind that choice in his book, Epicenter of Peace, which we present to you today. I must say that the book's first presentation in Washington was supposed to happen on September 11, 2001. The time that has passed since that tragic day has only confirmed and reinforced the urgent need to tackle the problems discussed in the book. Yet another argument against weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation is the photo exhibit, Kazakhstan: From Nuclear Nightmare to Epicenter of Peace, which you can see here.

Today Kazakhstan strongly urges the world to follow our example and further reduce and eliminate nuclear arsenals as well as other weapons of mass destruction, and prevent them from falling into the hands of terrorists.

This is the reason Kazakhstan has become a strong partner of the United States and the international coalition in the fight against terrorism from the very first days after the tragedy of September 11. We provide assistance to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Today our troops, the only ones. from our region, are taking part in the postwar stabilization and restoration of Iraq.

I believe Kazakhstan's experience of cooperating with the United States in nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction and eliminating the infrastructure that supports them provide meaningful answers to modern challenges.

We are eager to further strengthen our cooperation with the United States and other nations who are interested in the prevention of further proliferation of WMDs.

Today's forum, taking place in the U.S. Congress, a universally recognized citadel of democracy and freedom, is vivid proof of strengthening cooperation between Kazakhstan and the U.S. to ensure security in the world.

There are people in this room today who by the call of duty and the call of heart are committed to the ideal of nonproliferation and are doing everything possible to free the world of the threat of weapons of mass destruction. The symposium has gained a special significance with the participation of outstanding statesmen such as senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar who established the famous Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. I believe their enormous contribution to global security has yet to be fully appreciated by the world.

The Presidents of our two countries, George W. Bush and Nursultan Nazarbayev, support this symposium's goals and each sent a message. It is with great pleasure that I would like to carry out the honorable mission assigned to me by President Nursultan Nazarbayev and read out his message to the symposium.

Ambassador Saudabayev, assigned to Washington since December 2000, brings an important contribution strengthening the growing strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and the United States of America in the spheres of security, economy and democratic development.

Before his appointment to the U.S., Ambassador Saudabayev had a long career in the fields of government, diplomacy and the arts.

In 1999 and 2000, he served as the head of the Prime Minister's Office with the rank of Cabinet member.

In the 1990s, he served as Kazakhstan's Ambassador to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and to Turkey.

During 1994, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Saudabayev worked to implement the developing foreign policy of his young independent state. He was Kazakhstan's signatory to NATO's Partnership for Peace agreement.

In the fall of 1991, he became the last Soviet Ambassador ever appointed, to Turkey, by President Mikhail S. Gorbachev. As he was planning to take up his post, the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Within weeks he was on his way to Turkey again, but as the first Ambassador ever from an independent Kazakhstan to any nation.

Working in Moscow from September 1991 through May 1992 as the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic to the USSR, and then, after the Soviet Union collapsed, to the new Russian republic, Kanat Saudabayev was a direct participant in and a witness to many crucial events of those historic days.

Before entering the diplomatic service, Ambassador Saudabayev had a distinguished cultural career serving as Chairman of the State Committee of Culture with the rank of Minister, Chairman of the State Film Committee, and Deputy Culture Minister. He began his career as a theatrical producer.

Ambassador Saudabayev holds degrees from the Leningrad Institute of Culture and the Academy of Public Sciences of the Central Committee of Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He has a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Kazakh State University and a Ph.D. in Political Science from Moscow State University. His service has been recognized with the Order of Kurmet (Distinguished Service).

Kanat Saudabayev is married to Kullikhan with two sons and a daughter, and three grandchildren. He was born in the Almaty region in 1946.

MILESTONE NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

[The following list is of milestone nuclear explosions. In addition to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the first nuclear test of a given weapon type for a country is included, and tests which were otherwise notable (such as the largest test ever). All yields (explosive power) are given in their estimated energy equivalents in kilotons of TNT (see megaton).]

Date	Name	Yield (kt)	Country	Significance
Jul 16 1945	Trinity	19	USA	First fission weapon test
Aug 6 1945	Little Boy	15	USA	Bombing of Hiroshima, Japan
Aug 9 1945	Fat Man	21	USA	Bombing of Nagasaki, Japan
Aug 29 1949	Joe 1	22	USSR	First fission weapon test by the USSR
Oct 3 1952	Hurricane	25	UK	First fission weapon test by the UK
Nov 1 1952	Ivy Mike	10,200	USA	First "staged" thermonuclear weapon test (not deployable)
Aug 12 1953	Joe 4	400	USSR	First fusion weapon test by the USSR (not "staged", but deployable)
Mar 1 1954	Castle Bravo	15,000	USA	First deployable "staged" thermonuclear weapon; fallout accident
Nov 22 1955	RDS–37	1,600	USSR	First "staged" thermonuclear weapon test by the USSR (deployable)
Nov 8 1957	Grapple X	1,800	UK	First (successful) "staged" thermonuclear weapon test by the UK
Feb 13 1960	Gerboise Bleue	60	France	First fission weapon test by France
Oct 31 1961	Tsar Bomba	50,000	USSR	Largest thermonuclear weapon ever tested
Oct 16 1964	596	22	China	First fission weapon test by China
June 17 1967	Test No. 6	3,300	China	First "staged" thermonuclear weapon test by China
Aug 24 1968	Canopus	2,600	France	First "staged" thermonuclear test by France
May 18 1974	Smiling Buddha	12	India	First fission nuclear explosive test by India
May 11 1998	Shakti I	43	India	First potential fusion/boosted weapon test by India (exact yields disputed, between 25kt and 45kt)
May 13 1998	Shakti II	12	India	First fission "weapon" test by India
May 28 1998	Chagai-I	9	Pakistan	First fission weapon test by Pakistan

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. I would first like to commend my good friend and colleague from American Samoa, ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this important measure. He has been the leader in Congress on matters related to the legacy of nuclear testing, both in the former Soviet Union and in the Pacific, and we greatly appreciate his hard work.

Madam Speaker, upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the newly-minted independent nation of Kazakhstan found itself in possession of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Kazakhstan inherited more than 1,000 nuclear weapons and a squadron of heavy bombers armed with 370 nuclear warheads from the Soviet Union.

Rather than embrace their nuclear status, the people of Kazakhstan made a farsighted decision fifteen years ago. They closed their nation's nuclear test site, and yielded all of their inherited nuclear arsenal and weapons materials back to Russia.

Kazakhstan, the victim for so long of Soviet domination, completely and voluntarily rescinded their membership in the nuclear club. The nation proudly joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, or "NPT", as a non-nuclear weapon state, the first time a state that had possessed such a massive nuclear arsenal had done so.

While Kazakhstan made a wise decision to rid itself of its nuclear arsenal, the damage to the environment and to the health of the people of Kazakhstan will be felt for decades to come. Between 1945 and 1991, more than 450 nuclear tests were conducted at the Semipalatink test site, exposing more than 1.5 million innocent people to radiation and causing massive damage to the environment.

It is for that reason that the United States should work with Kazakhstan to establish a joint working group to help assess the environmental damage and health affects caused by the nuclear testing.

Madam Speaker, Kazakhstan's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, and to nuclear disarmament, is an inspiring one, and a shining example for others to follow. It has strengthened immeasurably the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, and we greatly appreciate these actions.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing likewise.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 905.

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

COMMENDING AND SUPPORTING RADIO AL MAHABA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 784) commending and supporting Radio Al Mahaba, Iraq's first and only radio station for women.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 784

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba, Iraq's first and only radio station for women, went on the air on April 1, 2005;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba is an educational tool, broadcasting in three different languages and giving women freedom to voice opinions and hear other opinions;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba airs shows dedicated to women's rights and women's issues;

Whereas such shows are devoted to relationships, parenting, and other social topics;

Whereas despite terrible risks, the staff of Radio Al Mahaba works at the station because they want to reach out and touch peoples' lives, and they want to give hope, knowledge, empowerment, support, and a passage to freedom to Iraqi women;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba, amid the struggles in Iraq, has followed the examples of the United States which guarantees freedoms of speech and the press, thereby encouraging Iraqis to build an open, democratic civil society;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba has a positive, important role in educating women;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba provides women with freedom of speech;

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba provides an opportunity for women to secure their role in the governance of a civil society within Iraq; and

Whereas Radio Al Mahaba meets a palpable need of Iraqi women: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the efforts of Radio Al Mahaba to provide Iraqi women with freedom of speech and an opportunity for women to be included in and informed of the reconstruction of Iraq with an open, democratic civil society;

(2) supports the mission of Radio Al Mahaba; and

(3) urges Al Mahaba to continue its important work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

□ 1600

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 784, introduced by our colleague Mrs. MCCARTHY, and a measure of which I am proud to be an original cosponsor, commends and supports Iraq's first and only radio station for women, Al Mahaba. All of us who have spent time in the Middle East know of the courage that it takes for women to take to the airwaves and provide education and information for women.

It was April 1, 2005, when Al Mahaba first went on the air. Despite personal risk, these courageous people took to the airwaves, in the words of the resolution, to reach out and touch people's lives, and give hope, knowledge empowerment, support and a passage to freedom to Iraqi women.

Its commitment was to serve as an important education resource for women, for broadcasting in three languages, and enabling women to hear, some for the very first time, messages about women's rights and women's issues. Radio Al Mahaba provides a forum for women to voice their opinions and to hear the opinions of other women who face the complexities of life for women in the Middle East.

The programming on Al Mahaba deals with issues specifically focused on women, which includes such important topics as relationships, parenting and other social issues which are not dealt with in other media. This radio station, which operates within the aura of what we in America know as our first amendment rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, is a wonderful example to Iraqi women and Iraqi people nationwide of the benefits of freedom. It plays an important role in paving the way for women to have more of a fundamental impact on Iraqi society.

House Resolution 784 appropriately commends the efforts of these pioneers. It supports the mission of Radio Al Mahaba and it encourages it to continue with its important work. I urge my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to support this important resolution.

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

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first I would like to commend and thank my good friend and colleague from New York, CAROLYN MCCARTHY, for sponsoring this very important measure.

Mr. Speaker, our intervention in Iraq and its aftermath have not been without controversy, but there are some developments there that I know every Member of this body is happy to embrace. Radio Al Mahaba represents just such a development.

Radio Al Mahaba is a unique phenomenon in the Middle East, a radio station for women dealing with issues of interest to women, and, more importantly, run by women.

In a society where a majority of women are illiterate, radio is a vital

means of imparting information. Of course, female illiteracy is a problem in virtually every state in the Islamic Middle East, which is precisely why Radio Al Mahaba is a model for the region.

I am pleased to report, Mr. Speaker, that Radio Al Mahaba is a fully independent radio station, both politically and religiously. It is surely one of the few Iraqi radio stations, some say the only one, that can be described in that way.

Mr. Speaker, Radio Al Mahaba was founded 1 year ago with a $500,000 grant from the United Nations Development Fund for Women. It started out broadcasting 6 hours a day; and as a result of its incredible popularity, it was up to 16 hours a day very soon thereafter. Unfortunately, it was forced to cut back after terrorists destroyed its transmitter. Nonetheless, Al Mahaba carries on.

Radio Al Mahaba is a beacon of free expression for Iraqi women, and it has the potential to make a remarkable contribution to the political and cultural growth of Iraqi society as a whole. It deserves the support of every Member of this body, as does the resolution commending its work.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge all of our colleagues to do likewise.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York, the sponsor of the resolution, CAROLYN MCCARTHY.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from New York for allowing me to speak on this, and I also want to thank my colleague from Florida, who has been a sponsor. We actually had a trip of women that went to Iraq and saw firsthand how important it is for the Iraqi women to have a voice.

Historically, Iraqi women were extremely well educated, but the educational suppression brought on by Saddam Hussein led to the illiteracy rate of women rising to almost 75 percent.

After Saddam was ousted, Bushra Jamil, an Iraqi who was living in Canada, saw an opportunity to empower the women of Iraq as it transitioned to democracy. Bushra returned home and created Radio Al Mahaba, the Middle East's only radio station for women. The station became so popular that they were broadcasting, as my colleague had said, 16 hours a day in three languages, Arabic, Kurdish and English.

While we take radio shows that cater to women for granted, this was a revolutionary concept in the Middle East. Women who had been oppressed for years were finally able to hear their side of the story.

The radio station provided a forum for women to make sure their voices were heard. The station received 100 calls a day from women asking questions, giving advice and voicing their opinions on the rebuilding of their country. The radio station had found an audience, and they were now financially sustainable through sponsorships.

But last October, unfortunately, the radio station fell silent. The terrorist attack on the Palestinian hotel in Baghdad destroyed their transmitter. And while the station was not the target of this attack, many leaders in Iraq were not all upset that these women's voices were silenced.

They found another transmitter, but it wasn't as powerful as the one they lost during the terrorist attack. This new transmitter could only reach about a third of their listening audience. Fewer listeners meant less sponsorship revenue for the station.

Unfortunately, the rented transmitter broke down about a month ago, and they are in desperate need of funds to get back on the air. Once they receive this funding, they plan to expand their listening audience to include all of Iraq and its neighbors. They are also planning on broadcasting in Persian to reach the women of Iran, who have been oppressed for nearly 30 years.

The radio station can be the place for women in Iraq and throughout the Middle East to learn about the issues that will affect their lives. The right to educate one's self and to be heard are cornerstones of our own democracy, and these characteristics should be carried over into the new Iraq.

The station's 28 full-time and part-time staff risk their lives every day by going to work. These people are Iraqi patriots, and I am confident their sacrifices will be rewarded.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had a chance to speak to President Bush about the station and he was very enthusiastic about the role it will play in a democratic Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this station and the resolution. I would like to thank members of the Iraqi Women's Caucus and the International Relations Committee. I would also like to thank Representatives OSBORNE, TAUSCHER, GRANGER, SOLIS, my colleague from New York, Mr. ACKERMAN and, of course, my colleague from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Chairman HYDE and Ranking Member LANTOS for their strong support of this station and this resolution. This has been a bipartisan effort from the start, and I hope we can continue to work together.

Mr. Speaker, with all the bad news that is coming out of Iraq, we must recognize those who are really trying to make a free Iraq. Democracy takes a long time. We can do this, but we all must work together.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) who is going to close our debate, the cochair of the Iraqi Women's Caucus here in the House.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned, I have served as a cochair of the Iraqi Women's Caucus. Some people may say, well, why would you have a Women's Caucus? The reason is at one point we were meeting with Paul Wolfowitz, and Paul was mentioning the fact that women had been subjugated in Iraq, had not been given a voice. So at that time Jennifer Dunn and I thought that maybe doing something to encourage Iraqi women would be helpful, because women tend to be oriented toward family, toward children, and they tend not to be as isolated by tribes, by ethnicity. As a result, we formed the Iraqi Women's Caucus. We felt that women could be a key to uniting Iraq.

So we are very encouraged by Radio Al Mahaba and the fact that they are now broadcasting in three languages. They do not recognize differences between the Shiia, the Kurds and the Sunnis; and they devote themselves almost entirely to women's issues. We feel that this is something that absolutely has to be encouraged.

In talking to Iraqi women who have come to the United States, and we have had many groups who come here, they have said that really Iraq is not as divided as most people in the United States believe, because there is intermarriage and there are cousins who are from one tribe or another and they all are related. So we feel that endeavors such as this are really important.

Mr. Speaker, we particularly want to commend the staff at the radio station, Al Mahaba, for their bravery, for their fortitude, and for what they are doing to try to bring Iraq together. I think one thing that we will find is that humanity has certain common instincts and needs, and certainly the desire to nurture on the part of women, and men as well, the desire to have strong families, the desire to have our children have a better life than what we had is something that is common to all of us.

So as we point out these things and as this radio station capitalizes on those instincts, I think we certainly are moving toward a better day in Iraq.

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 784, which commends and supports Radio Al Mahaba, Iraq's first and only radio station for women.

In the midst of all the bad news coming out of Iraq, it is important that we recognize one of the positive developments there. Radio Al Mahaba provides a unique service to the citizens of Iraq, particularly the women. It allows Iraqi women to express their opinions about issues important to them, including women's rights.

For Iraq to have any kind of future, there must be full participation and equal treatment under the law for women in Iraq. The voices of Iraqi women must be heard in all levels of government, the private sector, in schools, and in the media. I am pleased that today this body officially goes on the record in support of these efforts.

However, we should not stop here. We must continue to encourage the leadership in Iraq to protect the rights of women, particularly in the amendment process for the constitution. Iraqi women and men should be guaranteed equality in the constitution to ensure that women

will never become second-class citizens. Both women and men should have the right to vote, access to equal opportunities, and equal treatment under the law. I am particularly concerned that final language in the constitution could limit women's rights, including in matters such as divorce, child custody, and inheritance.

I have introduced legislation, H.R. 5548, the ''Empowerment of Iraqi Women Act of 2006,'' which would establish an Iraqi Women's Fund to help Iraqi women and girls in the areas of political, legal, and human rights, health care, education, training, security, and shelter, and it would authorize $22,500,000 in each fiscal year 2007, 2008, and 2009 for this fund. I have met with several delegations of Iraqi women during my trips to Iraq and here in Washington. I am always inspired by their strength and courage to speak out in support of equality, even in the face of danger. While these women have hope, they understand that the future is very uncertain.

I know my colleagues join me in expressing our strong support and solidarity with the women of Iraq as they fight for the rights to which they are entitled. I urge a ''yes'' vote on this important resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 784, a resolution that would celebrate Radio Al Mahaba, the first and only radio station for women in Iraq. Located in a country that only just recently employed a democratic system, Radio Al Mahaba is a true symbol of the rights associated with that system.

In Iraq's history, women were typically denied their basic rights. Radio Al Mahaba, which means ''Voice of Women,'' first went on the air on April 1, 2005 and represents just the opposite of this norm. It has become a forum where women can voice and discuss opinions and practice their freedoms of speech and the press. The station offers speaking opportunities for local volunteers and female journalists. It has been an effective tool not only to reach out to women throughout Iraq, but also to encourage greater female participation in the electoral process. Thus, the establishment of Radio Al Mahaba was truly a step in the right direction towards establishing autonomy and liberties for women in Iraq.

Moreover, Radio Al Mahaba can be a key source for open communication among the people of Iraq, delivering information, such as news alerts, when necessary. It also represents a positive result of the U.S. presence in Iraq.

Today, it is critical that we commend Radio Al Mahaba for its inspiring work and encourage it to stay on the air for years to come. I commend Congresswoman MCCARTHY for proposing H. Res. 784, and I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support House Resolution 784, the resolution that commends Iraq's first and only radio station for women.

As the women of Iraq continue to fight for their rightful place in society, we must recognize the avenues they have engineered for themselves that provide the forum for practicing their right to be heard.

Established in 2005, the radio station is appropriately named al-Mahaba, which means ''love'' in Arabic, is the first and only independent women's radio station in Iraq. The station was funded by UNIFEM, a United Nations agency that supports women's issues, and is not affiliated to any political party.

Having returned from a recent Codel trip to Iraq, I was very fortunate to have met with women representatives from the radio station who expressed their commitment to women's issues. These strong and courageous women understand much too well the importance of taking a stand against oppression and know they have found a new sense of empowerment.

The station's purpose is to reconcile women's rights, which have been arbitrarily taken away by political regimes; and to encourage them to face their fears and learn to assert themselves as women.

I support the format facilitated by the radio station because it provides women with a long overdue venue where they can tell their stories, share their ambitions and express their fears.

When calling the radio station, these women address a wide range of personal and political issues that have a direct affect on them as women. The format allows them to candidly share enduring numerous beatings from their husbands; share their frustrations with the consistent pressure from religious groups to wear the hijab; and express their fear of having a strict form of Islamic Law imbedded in their society.

For women who feel as forgotten members of society, the radio station provides them a haven to freely express themselves without fear of judgment or persecution. These women endure immense atrocities and oppressions and we must support and recognize their efforts to assert themselves as strong voices in Iraq's society.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WAMP). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 784.

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, 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. 3504. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of tissue from fetuses gestated for research purposes, and for other purposes.

CONVEYANCE OF REVERSIONARY INTEREST OF UNITED STATES IN CERTAIN LANDS TO CLINT INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 860) to provide for the conveyance of the reversionary interest of the United States in certain lands to the Clint Independent School District, El Paso County, Texas.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 860

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

SECTION 1. CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY.

(a) CONVEYANCE.—Subject to section 2, the Secretary of State shall execute and file in the appropriate office such instrument as may be necessary to release the reversionary interest of the United States in the land referred to in subsection (b).

(b) LAND DESCRIBED.—The land described in this subsection consists of Tracts 4–B, 5, and 7, Block 14, San Elizario Grant, County of El Paso, State of Texas.

SEC. 2. TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

The release under section 1 shall be made upon condition that the Clint Independent School District in the County of El Paso, State of Texas, use any proceeds received from the disposal of such land for public educational purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 860, a bill to provide for the conveyance of the reversionary interest of the United States in certain lands to the Clint Independent School District of El Paso County, Texas.

In 1940, the Clint District School received 20 acres of land that the United States Government had obtained by treaty with Mexico. The Department of State retained reversionary interests in the parcel. Because of legislation passed in 1957, Clint was able to trade the land for another piece of land in which the U.S. Government also had a reversionary interest. The Clint School District still owns that piece of land.

During the 105th Congress, Congressman REYES introduced legislation, a similar bill to the one before us, which would have provided for the conveyance of the reversionary interest of the United States in this land to the Clint Independent School District. This legislation became public law number 105–169 on April 24, 1998, but a drafting error led to the misidentification of the land in question and thus rendered this public law obsolete. This bill before us, Mr. Speaker, H.R. 860, corrects that error.

Mr. Speaker, because the land in question still lies outside of Clint's boundaries, regulations prevent the school district from developing it. H.R. 860 will allow Clint to sell its land in

order to buy property within its district boundaries that can be used for public educational purposes.

□ 1615

This legislation has been approved by the State Department and approved by the House International Relations Committee and I urge its passage.

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

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, and yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for all of her efforts. I want to especially single out the hard work of my good friend and colleague from Texas, SILVESTRE REYES, for his steadfast efforts to help the Clint Independent School District improve the quality of education for its students.

Mr. Speaker, this bill seeks to correct a technical error in legislation which the 105th Congress passed. That legislation should have relinquished the Federal Government's reversionary interest in a tract of land that is owned by the Clint Independent School District.

Unfortunately, the wrong coordinates for the land were included in the bill. This bill, H.R. 860, completes the transfer of property rights for the school district so that it can proceed with a planned sale of the land.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support H.R. 860.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES).

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York for yielding me time, and my good friend from Florida, the gentlewoman, for her support in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 860, a bill to provide for the conveyance of reversionary interests of the United States in certain lands in my district of El Paso County, Texas to the Clint Independent School District.

The passage of H.R. 860 comes on the heels of an interesting footnote in our history. In 1940, Clint Independent School District received 20 acres of land that the United States Government had obtained from Mexico through the Convention of February 1, 1933.

In the treaty, the two governments agreed to cooperate in the construction and maintenance of the Rio Grande Rectification Project, which ultimately straightened and reinforced 155 miles of river boundary flowing through the increasingly developed El Paso, Texas-Juarez, Chihuahua area.

In addition to helping provide a more stable international boundary, the project also helped occasional flooding in that region. After giving the land to the school district, the Department of State retained reversionary interest in the parcel. In 1957 Federal statutes gave Clint Independent School District the ability to trade that piece of land for another, which it did, acquiring a separate parcel in which the United States had also retained reversionary interest.

Today, Clint Independent School District still owns that one piece of land. Unfortunately, because the land in question lies outside of Clint's boundaries, district regulations prevent the school district from developing it.

H.R. 860 will allow Clint to sell its land in order to buy property within its own district boundaries. All proceeds from such a sale must and will be used for public educational purposes. This legislation has been approved by the State Department and reported favorably by the House International Relations Committee. Of the nine school districts in El Paso County, Clint is the largest in square mileage, encompassing a diverse area in the fast-growing east El Paso County.

The district itself is one of the most rapidly expanding in Texas, with an estimated student population of 9,000-plus, a figure that is expected to double within the next 5 years.

All together, the district has 12 campuses, three high schools, two middle schools, one junior high school and six elementary schools. This bill will afford Clint the ability to help keep pace with its growth and help the district provide its students a high-quality educational experience.

I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE of Illinois and Mr. LANTOS of California, as well as my friend from New York and my friend from Florida, for reporting this beneficial piece of legislation out of their committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank our leader, Ms. PELOSI, and minority whip, Mr. HOYER for their support and assistance in bringing this bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 860.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WAMP). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 860.

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.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2389, PLEDGE PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

Mr. GINGREY (during consideration of H.R. 860), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–577) on the resolution (H. Res. 920) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2389) to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONGRATULATING ISRAEL'S MAGEN DAVID ADOM SOCIETY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 435) congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 435

Whereas international humanitarian law is, quintessentially, about principle, establishing standards of conduct that can not be breached under any circumstance, or for any calculation of political efficacy or utility;

Whereas the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a worldwide institution in which all national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have equal status, whose mission is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, without discrimination;

Whereas the Magen David Adom (Red Shield of David) Society is the national humanitarian society in the State of Israel and has performed heroically, aiding all in need of assistance, on a purely humanitarian basis, without bias, even those responsible for acts of horrific violence against Israeli civilians;

Whereas since 1949 the Magen David Adom Society has been refused admission into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation and has been relegated to observer status without a vote because it has used the Red Shield of David, the only such national organization denied membership in the Movement;

Whereas the red cross symbol was intended as the visible expression of the neutral status enjoyed by the medical services of the armed forces and the protection thus conferred, and there is not, and has never been, any implicit religious connection in the cross;

Whereas since its establishment in 1930, the Magen David Adom Society, because it does not use either a red cross or a red crescent, has been prevented from full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation;

Whereas Israel acceded to the Geneva Conventions in 1951 with a reservation specifying their intent to continue to use the Magen David Adom;

Whereas international consultations among nations and national Red Cross Societies ensued until 1999, when the International Committee of the Red Cross formally called for adoption of a protocol to the Geneva Conventions creating a third neutral symbol; allowing the use of either the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, or the third neutral symbol; and allowing for the third neutral symbol to be used in combination with other national Red Cross Society symbols—including the Magen David Adom;

Whereas a diplomatic conference to adopt this proposal into the Geneva Conventions

was scheduled for October 2000, but was prevented by the outbreak of the second Palestinian intifada;

Whereas the United States and the American Red Cross have worked ceaselessly to resolve the issue of the third neutral symbol and achieve full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation for the Magen David Adom Society;

Whereas Congress has insisted that funds made available to the headquarters of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement be contingent on a certification by the Secretary of State confirming that the Magen David Adom Society is a full participant in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross;

Whereas the American Red Cross has stood alone among all the national humanitarian aid societies, and has withheld over $45,000,000 in dues to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to protest the exclusion of the Magen David Adom;

Whereas the Government of Switzerland, the depositary state for the Geneva Conventions, convened a Diplomatic Conference of the states parties to the Geneva Conventions in December 2005 for the purpose of adopting a Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (the ''Geneva Protocol III'') and rightly resisted efforts to block the broad international consensus in favor of resolving the third neutral symbol question;

Whereas the efforts by the United States and the American Red Cross at the Diplomatic Conference in December 2005 were critical to achieving both an overwhelming positive vote in favor of adopting the Geneva Protocol III, as well as an extremely important memorandum of understanding between the Magen David Adom and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society;

Whereas sustaining international support for the adoption of the third neutral symbol against efforts to divert the conference into unrelated political matters required extraordinary diplomatic efforts by the United States and the American Red Cross;

Whereas the Geneva Protocol III adopted in Geneva in December 2005 established the new third neutral symbol, the ''red crystal'' that can be used in conjunction with the Red Shield of David and cleared the way for Israel's full participation in the international movement;

Whereas in June 2006 the states parties to the Geneva Conventions, the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, the Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross met in Geneva to adopt rules implementing the Geneva Protocol III; and

Whereas following the June 2006 meeting in Geneva, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation accepted the Magen David Adom Society as a full member: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) Congress—

(A) commends the Magen David Adom Society for its long and distinguished record of providing humanitarian assistance to all those in need of aid, even those responsible for heinous atrocities against Israeli civilians;

(B) congratulates the Magen David Adom Society, and the Government and the people of the State of Israel, for securing full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation, 57 years past due;

(C) thanks the President, the Secretary of State, and United States diplomatic representatives for their tireless pursuit and maintenance of the international support that culminated in the Magen David Adom Society's recent acceptance as a full member in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation;

(D) thanks the American Red Cross for its unwavering and unyielding insistence within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement that the humanitarian principle of universality could not be reconciled with continued exclusion of the Magen David Adom Society; and

(E) thanks the Government of Switzerland and officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross for helping to prepare the necessary groundwork and carrying to completion the adoption of the Geneva Protocol III by the states parties to the Geneva Conventions and the rules for its implementation; and

(2) Congress commends the President for—

(A) submitting the Geneva Protocol III to the Senate for its advice and consent; and

(B) pending approval by the Senate, preparing for congressional consideration and enactment of legislation necessary to carry into effect the Geneva Protocol III.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 435, congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement.

On June 22, the Society was recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross and admitted as a full member into the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The Society's attaining full membership in the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement is a significant achievement, as it marks an end to Israel's almost 60-year-old isolation from the international human rights assistance community.

Since 1949, the Society has been refused admission into the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement simply due to the fact that they used the Red Shield of David as its symbol. For years, the Society has worked closely with the International Red Cross bringing emergency relief to victims of hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods around the globe.

It has brought its medical services and cutting-edge technology to provide assistance to disasters, such as Katrina in the U.S. Gulf Coast, tsunami relief in southeast Asia, and the flooding in Romania. This resolution commends the Magen David Adom Society for its distinguished record of humanitarian service and congratulates this organization for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The resolution before us thanks the President and the Secretary of State for their tireless efforts toward this goal, and for submitting to the Senate the third additional protocol for the Geneva Convention.

The resolution also expresses appreciation to the American Red Cross for its insistence that the goals of the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement could not be credibly accomplished if Magen David Adom was excluded.

Lastly, this measure thanks the Government of Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross for paving the way for Israel's full inclusion into the international humanitarian assistance community.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to the Magen David Adom for the remarkable job that it has done for years in saving the lives around the globe and for this landmark achievement.

I want to give a personal congratulations to my ranking member on the Middle East and Central Asia Subcommittee, Mr. ACKERMAN, who is the author and the chief sponsor of this resolution. This is a subject with which he has been intimately involved in a number of years, and it is thanks in large part to his participation in this effort that we have finally brought this organization on board. Congratulations.

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

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and ranking member for their assistance in getting this resolution through the committee, and especially note the hard work and determination of my colleague, the chairperson of the subcommittee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida. Their support is deeply appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, there are very, very few issues that are really just black and white, where there are good guys and there are bad guys. This struggle, the 60-year effort to win membership for Israel's humanitarian society, the Magen David Adom, Israel's Blue Shield of David, into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, has been such an enterprise.

Like all of my colleagues speaking in support of this resolution, I am honored to have been part of that struggle, and am deeply gratified by the clear, indeed overwhelming victory MDA won last month in Geneva. It is a triumph where humanitarian principles overranked politics and bigotry.

It is a triumph for the State of Israel and the Jewish people. It is a triumph for patient, cooperative, multilateral diplomacy and especially American leadership. The victory of MDA really illustrates how important American leadership is, and what this Nation can accomplish with determination, tenacity, and a commitment to holding and protecting the moral high ground in international debate.

There never was a good argument against MDA. And with that fact came the moral strength and clarity. And with that strength and clarity came this hard-won victory.

As Dr. Martin Luther King liked to say, the arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice. A lot of people earned a share of the success that occurred in Geneva. Many of us in the House wrote letters, spoke directly with the Red Cross officials in Europe and with officials within the administration to let them know that Congress backed them 100 percent.

All we asked in return was, What more we could do to help? Credit is also due to America's diplomats and to America's humanitarians. Secretary Rice's State Department showed again what a force American diplomacy can be in a righteous cause.

And the American Red Cross, the American Red Cross alone in the entire world drew a line in the sand, withholding $45 million in dues to the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies until the MDA won equal treatment. Only the American Red Cross was willing to put its money where its mouth was and to insist that international humanitarian law should not, could not, and now thankfully cannot be used as a tool of discrimination against Israel.

This resolution congratulates Israel on the Magen David Adom Society, which is facing a terrible trial right now, with terrorist rockets falling both in northern and southern Israel. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both. The Magen David Adom stands for everything Hezbollah and Hamas reject, the independence of Israel as a sovereign Jewish state, equal treatment and protection for all people, regardless of their faith, and the belief that there are standards of behavior beyond the realm of political convenience, and above all, the value of life over death.

Mr. Speaker, in the business of international politics and diplomacy, clear-cut triumphs are few and far between. I am thrilled to be able to celebrate with you today what a bipartisan, bicameral, cross-branch, multinational, public-private effort can do.

□ 1630

But what we are here to celebrate principally is a high moral triumph. I want to thank all of those who helped bring us to this great day and to the Magen David Adom, I say yasher koach, and congratulations on this well-deserved and long-overdue victory.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2¼ minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) and thank her for her leadership in this effort as well.

Ms. BERKLEY. Thank you very much, coming from you, who truly was a leader in this issue. I appreciate the recognition and do not deserve it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution and ask for its immediate passage. Since its establishment in 1930, Magen David Adom, or MDA, has been denied membership in the International Committee of the Red Cross for refusing to replace its red Star of David emblem with one of the approved symbols.

For nearly 60 years, the International Red Cross refused to admit MDA unless it adopted the red cross or the red crescent as its symbol. This past December, a third additional emblem, the red diamond, was finally established. It is about time.

Since 1949, the Magen David Adom Society was the only national organization denied full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. It was denied full membership simply because it used a red star instead of a red cross or a red crescent.

It should not have taken 60 years for an honest discussion of MDA membership in the Red Cross, free from religious intolerance or bigotry. During that time, the American Red Cross stood alone as the only member of the International Red Cross to protest the exclusion of the MDA.

In those 60 years, in spite of the official slight, MDA has performed heroically, aiding those in need and providing humanitarian assistance. It has done this without regard for race or religion. It did this to help alleviate pain and suffering throughout the world, even among Israel's enemies.

In April of this year, MDA was in Romania assisting the local population after the disastrous flooding of the Danube. After Hurricane Katrina, MDA collected donations, clothing and equipment in Israel to help meet the needs of the hundreds of thousands of homeless.

Last month, the state party to the Geneva convention adopted the neutral red diamond symbol of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement finally accepted MDA as a full member. May I say it's about time.

I join my colleagues in congratulating MDA on its admittance to the Red Cross. While this should have happened 60 years ago, we are glad that MDA has been given the recognition that it has always deserved.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who has been one of the paramount leaders in this fight.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank my friend from New York. All of us in New York that are distinguished gentlemen think that everybody else is a distinguished gentleman. So I thank the distinguished gentleman from New York, and I commend him and my good friend from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for this very important and very, very timely resolution.

For many, many years, everyone you have heard speak, Mr. Speaker, has played an important part in finally getting Magen David Adom recognized. One of the problems that we have seen in international bodies is that Israel has been systematically excluded and vilified by majorities that have nothing to do with what's right and nothing to do with reality, but just simply trying to ostracize Israel and make it difficult for them, whether it is in the United Nations or anything else. This was the case with the International Society of the Red Cross.

This happened for many, many years, and then the United States Society of the Red Cross really got involved at the behest of many of us. We have been very, very helpful in finally paving the way for this compromise that so many of my colleagues have spoken about. I had the good fortune to be in Geneva when this was agreed to and this was done.

It was very good for me to personally be there to see it, because, again, this has been 10 years or more that many of us in Congress have worked together to try to see this. At the last minute, it nearly got derailed again because Syria was playing its old games, up to its old games, and then tried to make it very, very difficult.

When people are in need, politics should not be involved. It doesn't matter whether it is the Red Cross or Red Crescent or Magen David Adom. Whatever society the people who are helping want to help, politics should not play a role.

Those of us who are New Yorkers and lived through the World Trade Center, we know how important it is to have the first responders there to help us.

It is fair, it is equitable and I commend my colleagues.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and thank him not just for his leadership but for his life-long commitment.

Mr. CARDIN. Let me thank my friend from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) for his leadership on many of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important moment. We have been working now, many have been working now, for almost 60 years to bring this date together. The Magen David Adom Society, like the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, provides unbiased aid, regardless of whom is in need.

Mr. Speaker, when tragedies occur, it is a welcome sight to see the internationally recognized symbol of help. It has been true in all countries where members have been part of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, but Israel was denied that membership.

For reasons unrelated to its society that provided that help, the MDA provided unbiased help to all in need and was entitled to be recognized internationally. It has taken almost 60 years to achieve this moment, and I think it is very appropriate that we, in this body, recognize this moment and the role that the United States has played in making this happen.

But for the leadership of our country in support of the MDA in Israel, we would not be able to celebrate this moment, and victims of disasters would be the losers. I congratulate all involved. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

I rise today in strong support as an original co-sponsor of H. Con. Res. 435, which congratulates Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Since its founding in 1859, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have helped millions of people in need through its dedication to providing impartial and compassionate aid to victims of war, internal violence, and disaster, regardless of political or religious affiliation. For over 140 years, the Movement has been the world's leader in humanitarian aid.

In Israel, the Magen David Adom (MDA) Society has upheld these same goals, providing impartial aid to those in need. As a committed humanitarian organization, MDA has been a model of excellence, embodying the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's goals of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

Unfortunately, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has for decades rejected the MDA's full admittance into the Organization because of the MDA's refusal to use the accepted symbols of a cross or crescent.

It has taken decades of discussion to reach a compromise, but one comes to us now in the form of a diamond. The red crystal will soon fly high—a beacon of hope to all who see it.

Since its founding in 1930, the MDA has proven its quality time and again through its rapid response to war areas and to natural disasters such as the earthquakes and tsunami, as well as through its compassionate treatment of civilian victims and injured perpetrators of horrific acts of violence alike. The MDA, like all Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, provides unbiased aid, regardless of who is in need. For this they are at last being recognized through full membership in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—a classification they have long since deserved.

The MDA has fought for this designation since 1949, but until now has been perpetually relegated to observer status due solely to its use of the Shield of David as their symbol. The American Red Cross, the U.S. Government, and Congress have never wavered in their pressure for this positive outcome, and I am thrilled that now the MDA will benefit from full membership in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—benefits that will then be passed on to the millions of victims that the Organization helps.

This solidarity on behalf of impartial humanitarian aid is especially commendable given the current climate in the Middle East. In a moment in history when the region hovers on the brink of war, the internationally-recognized symbols of help and compassion are a welcome sight on all fronts, reminding us all of the dignity of life and the necessity of compromise and compassion. The union of the MDA and the Red Cross and Crescent Movement represents a movement towards cooperation and consideration, and encourages hope in a time when such hope is so desperately needed.

I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution to celebrate a new symbol of hope on the Israeli landscape, and to congratulate the Magen David Adom Society for at last achieving the recognition it has long deserved.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased the day has come that Congress can officially congratulate Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Since the Knesset ratified the Magen David Adom Law in 1950, the Society has functioned as Israel's National Red Cross Society. While acting in accordance with the Geneva Convention, Magen David Adom has maintained a national civilian blood bank and has also provided emergency first-aid services and temporary shelter in emergency situations.

As Israel has defended itself against terrorist attacks, the Magen David Adom Society has been there to bravely and heroically provide humanitarian assistance to all those in need. Yet despite its clear and undeniable accordance with the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, until recently Magen David Adom was refused admission into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and has been relegated to observer status without a vote because it has used the Red Shield of David. As such, it was the only such national organization denied membership in the Movement.

In 2005, the Government of Switzerland convened a Diplomatic Conference of the states parties to the Geneva Conventions to adopt a Third Additional Protocol allowing for the third neutral symbol to be used in combination with other national Red Cross Society symbols. I am so grateful to the Swiss government for initiating this effort and proud of the United States diplomats who worked tirelessly to achieve an overwhelming positive vote in favor of adopting this protocol.

So I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Magen David Adom Society for its full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and my appreciation for its distinguished record of providing humanitarian assistance to all those in need of aid.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Magen David Adom (MDA) Society for securing full membership in the International Red Cross.

For many years the Magen David Adom Society was denied the right to join the International Red Cross. The Red Cross informed them that they could not use the Star of David, a symbol integral to their identity as the first aid and disaster relief organization of the Jewish State. The International Red Cross informed them that in order to join they would have to abandon their symbol and take on a symbol like the Christian cross or Moslem red crescent.

Standing fast to their principles, they continued to use the Star of David as their symbol as they dedicated themselves to excellence and rose as one of the premier ambulatory organizations in the world. In addition to their extensive record in providing aid to those in need all throughout Israel, they have excelled through their contributions to medical relief efforts throughout the world. The United States owes a great debt to MDA's assistance during the Hurricane Katrina disaster where they used their expertise and state-of-the-art technology to save the lives of countless Americans. Their relief work abroad is extensive, including their recent disaster relief work in Turkey, Sri Lanka, and Romania.

In light of the MDA's role as a leader in the field, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice diligently worked with our allies abroad to allow MDA to join the International Red Cross. Through her work and the efforts of countless others, Israel's medical society has finally been admitted to the International Red Cross when a neutral symbol, the Red Diamond, was accepted as an alternative symbol. Israel is now free to use the Star of David within a diamond as their international insignia as a full-fledged member of the International Red Cross. This alliance between the Magen David Adom Society and the International Committee of the Red Cross is truly a monumental step for all humanitarian efforts and hopefully can serve as a model of international goodwill.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution and to congratulate Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross.

Magen David Adom (MDA), Israel's first-aid and disaster relief organization, was granted full membership into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society on June 21, 2006. The decision, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland at the 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent voted to accept both the Palestinian Red Crescent and Magen David Adom. Both organizations are now full voting members, and received crucial funding to assist in their life-saving work.

Internationally, MDA has served in crisis spots around the world for 50 years alongside Red Cross, bringing emergency relief to victims of hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Earlier this year, MDA specialists flew to Romania to assist the local population with the disastrous flooding of the River Danube.

During the Katrina nightmare, MDA started "United Brotherhood" to collect donations, clothing and equipment in Israel to help meet the needs of the 400,000 homeless along the American gulf coast.

The relief effort after Southeast Asian tsunami found MDA running two emergency clinics in Sri Lanka and providing thousands of blood units. At every turn, the MDA has offered their help to nations in need.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the International Red Cross for granting MDA full membership, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution congratulating the Magen David Adom Society.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am proud to yield back the balance of

my time. It has been a pleasure working with my good friend, Mr. ACKERMAN.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 435, 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.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: ''Concurrent resolution congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, 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. 2754. An act to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos.

FETUS FARMING PROHIBITION ACT OF 2006

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 3504) to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of tissue from fetuses gestated for research purposes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 3504

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 ''Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF THE SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF TISSUE FROM FETUSES GESTATED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.

Section 498B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 289g–2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

''(c) SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF TISSUE FROM FETUSES GESTATED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.—It shall be unlawful for any person or entity involved or engaged in interstate commerce to—

''(1) solicit or knowingly acquire, receive, or accept a donation of human fetal tissue knowing that a human pregnancy was deliberately initiated to provide such tissue; or

''(2) knowingly acquire, receive, or accept tissue or cells obtained from a human embryo or fetus that was gestated in the uterus of a nonhuman animal.'';

(3) in paragraph (1) of subsection (d), as so redesignated, by striking ''(a) or (b)'' and inserting ''(a), (b), or (c)''; and

(4) in paragraph (1) of subsection (e), as so redesignated, by striking ''section 498A(f)'' and inserting ''section 498A(g)''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in support of this bill along with my good friend, Congresswoman DEGETTE of Colorado.

I rise today in the strongest possible support of S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act. Every so often, we deal with a subject on this floor that is so ugly that the language almost is unable to qualify and quantify that ugliness. Today is one of those moments. When you know what fetus farming is, words like obnoxious and repugnant seem timid.

As we know, fetus farming is the gruesome idea of creating a human fetus purely for research to harvest its organs. This bill would ban that practice, and we cannot ban it, in my opinion, soon enough. Most scientists today share the belief that human life should not be created just for the purposes of experimentation, or for harvesting the organs of one person to be given to another. The vast majority of scientists in our Nation uphold the ethical and moral principles on which our country forever rests, the inalienable right to life and the inherent value of human life in whatever form it may take. These scientists are working tirelessly with the knowledge that their efforts are to benefit life, benefit humanity, not to benefit one person for profit at the detriment of another person.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have seen clear examples in other countries that some scientists see things somewhat differently.

It is towards these scientists that the pending legislation is directed. Rather than waiting for a horror story to appear on the front pages or allowing for the possibility of scientific advancement taking us down a slippery slope, this bill gives a clear signal that fetus farming in all of its forms will not be tolerated in the United States, nor will we allow human fetuses or embryos to be bought and sold for research like cattle.

This legislation will ensure that nobody gains financially when unborn children are exploited for fetal tissue research. This legislation sends the right message on the importance of human dignity and life at the right time.

Before the Pandora's box of fetus farming is opened and it is too late for us to do something about it, I will urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. I just must say, Mr. Speaker, this has got to be a new record of transmission of a bill from the Senate to the House. I was literally on the Senate floor a few minutes ago when S. 3504 was passed, and I had to run to the House to have it considered.

I think this bill is just fine. I am not sure that there is a pressing problem in this country right now of fetal farming, but I will support it. Like my chairman, Mr. BARTON, I have complete and abhorrent opposition to the idea of people doing fetal farming.

I must say, though, that if people are worried about women becoming pregnant so they can be paid for making fetal tissue available for research, I want to point out that the current law already prohibits the sale of fetal tissue. Section 498(b) of the Public Health Service Act says: ''It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly acquire, receive or otherwise transfer any human fetal issue for valuable consideration.''

In addition, a yearly amendment that we do, called Dickey-Wicker, already forbids the creation of a human embryo or embryos for research purposes. So while this bill is completely unnecessary, I guess we will just pass it today and move on.

But here is the real reason this bill has been fast-tracked from the Senate, why there is a second bill that will be fast-tracked from the Senate, and that is because of H.R. 810, the Embryonic Stem Cell Enhancement Act, which has been cosponsored by my friend MIKE CASTLE from Delaware and myself.

This important piece of legislation expands embryonic stem cell research so that the 110 million Americans and their families who suffer from diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, nerve cell damage and on and on, so that the bill would allow embryonic research to be expanded so that those patients can have hope for cures.

Unlike many other kinds of stem cells, adult stem cells and cord blood, embryonic stem cells have shown great promise in being a potential cure for these diseases. That is why a majority of this body passed that legislation on May 24 of 2005.

□ 1645

This is why the Senate is poised to pass that legislation with over 60 votes today.

H.R. 810 will go directly to the President's desk. Sadly, the President has announced his intention to make H.R. 810 the very first veto of his 6-year administration. He has signed over 1,600

bills, but he has announced he is going to veto a bill that could provide hope for tens of millions of Americans.

In order to do that, though, the President will need cover, since 72 percent of Americans support embryonic stem cell research, and that is what this bill, S. 3504, and its companion bill from the Senate will hopefully I guess give the administration cover.

There will be no solace, these bills, to the patients of America. These bills are merely a fig leaf to show that the veto that is happening is going to prevent the most promising research that could happen for all these patients, and so while I support S. 3504, no one would support fetus farming. Let us really call this what this is.

This is the first in a pair of fig leaf bills designed to give cover to the President, and I, for one, think it is a sad day when we are rushing to judgment on such an important research potential.

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

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL), the subcommittee chairman.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in support of this legislation. As a cosponsor of the House equivalent of this Senate bill to prohibit fetus farming, I believe it is something that we need to take action on.

What is fetus farming? Simply put, it is the creation and development of a human fetus for the purposes of later killing it for research or for harvesting its organs.

While advances in scientific research have led to some new and exciting treatments that have enlarged and enhanced the quality and length of human life, we must not lose sight as to what we are trying to accomplish. Scientific advancement should aim to affirm and to improve human life.

Unfortunately, some have begun to pursue scientific research for its own benefit or for profit, without respect for human life. Science without respect for human life is degrading to us all and reflects a hollow and deceptive philosophy, a philosophy that we as a people should never condone.

In the grisly process of fetus farming, a woman might become pregnant with the sole intention of selling the tissue of her unborn child. An unscrupulous individual could pay a young, underprivileged woman, for example, to become pregnant so that the fetal tissue could be harvested. Even more appalling and disturbing, human embryos could be harvested for their tissue after developing in the womb of a nonhuman animal.

While some of these scenarios may seem like something out of the realm of fantasy, fetus farming is an emerging possibility in our world. As I stand here today, some scientists are engaged in animal research that uses cloned embryos, implanted and grown in the womb before being aborted so that the tissue could be harvested. Sometimes, cloned animal fetuses are allowed to develop almost to the newborn stage before being aborted and used to test new therapies.

We now know that human cloning is not only a possibility but is already happening. Many of my colleagues may have heard or read about a technique called somatic cell nuclear transfer, also known as therapeutic cloning, in which a cloned human embryo is created and then destroyed for the purposes of harvesting its cells. It is only one small step further to begin creating and developing human fetuses for the purposes of research or for harvesting the unborn child's organs.

Just because scientists have the knowledge to do it, the technology to do it, and some may even have a financial motive or other incentive to do it, does not make it right.

Congress should take this proactive step to eliminate fetus farming. Human life should never be made into a commodity, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of S. 3504.

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

That message from the Senate, I guess, means that within moments, sheer moments, S. 2754 will also be up on the House here because, as I said, this entire package is being railroaded through so that it can reach the President's desk in a neat little package.

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

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from the First State, Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), the distinguished former Governor, to speak on this particular bill.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I hope I have the right bill. I am a little confused, too, the way bills are flying through here.

I do rise in support of the bill the chairman has spoken of, S. 3504, legislation which is aimed at preventing so-called fetal farming; and while such fetal farming may not be taking place now, I applaud my colleagues for being forward thinking and targeting such an exploitive practice now.

This legislation is critical because it places ethical restrictions on what can and cannot be done in federally funded research.

Ethical guidelines are absolutely critical to guide all federally funded research. That is exactly why Representative DIANA DEGETTE and I have been pressing strongly for President Bush to sign H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, into law. Contrary to popular belief, H.R. 810 does not increase funding for embryonic stem cell research, nor does it fund the creation or destruction of embryos. Rather, it allows researchers access to the best and most promising stem cell lines, while creating for the first time an ethical construct to guide this research at the National Institutes of Health.

H.R. 810 has strict financial prohibitions in place, and it prohibits the creation of embryos for research purposes. It enables the creators of the embryo to first make a decision about what they want to do with leftover embryos, which are really 5-day-old blastocysts, no bigger than the tip of a pencil. If they choose discard, it allows them the option to donate these embryos to research, instead of medical waste. No money can exchange hands throughout the process. The legislation only allows federally funded research on stem cell lines derived ethically with private funds. No Federal funds can be used.

Mr. Speaker, biomedical research is something that must be carefully monitored and rigorous guidelines must be established. That is exactly what this bill, S. 3504, aims to do, and it is what H.R. 810 aims to do. I ask my colleagues to support the underlying legislation and to urge President Bush not to veto H.R. 810.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the Energy and Commerce Committee for yielding to me and want to commend her on the outstanding job she is doing in fighting for embryonic stem cell research, which the American people want. The American people across ideological lines understand that this is something that will help people in their battles against illness; and why there is such rigid ideology on the other side, I just really do not understand.

The Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006 is fine the way it is. None of us oppose it. None of us would take issue with it, but it does not really do what the American people want us to do.

The American people know that the United States has always led the way with medical research. We have always led the way in finding cures for diseases. We have always led the way in terms of our health care.

And what is happening is obviously because there has been a prohibition on stem cell research, that we have fallen behind, and so other countries are eclipsing us, other countries which I believe cannot do it as well as we could do it if we were allowed to do it. And so as a result, people are dying and being injured with no help every day when, if we were permitted to have stem cell research, we could have the help that we need.

This is an undertaking that really the Federal Government needs to put itself behind and which cannot work if it is left to the private sector. It cannot work if it is only going to be certain kinds of cells or certain limited amounts of cells.

This has to be something that we have to do. I am very sensitive to people who care about this issue; but this, to me, has nothing to do with the issue of abortion or any of those issues. This is about saving people's lives and making it easier for people who have loved

ones, who are ill and who would rely on this kind of research to get better soon.

So I would hope that my colleagues would support stem cell research and vote for this bill; but again, this bill is only a scratch. We need to do much more.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), one of the leaders in the pro-life community.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, fetus farming, the growing of embryos and fetuses so as to derive tissue or organs and other cells for research or treatment, turns human beings into commodities.

Fetus farming is a grave violation of human rights and is an act of research violence that Congress must stop.

The harbinger of human fetus farming, Mr. Speaker, can be found in animal fetus farming studies already under way. We know that researchers are not doing this research to advance veterinary medicine.

Dr. Robert Lanza, for example, of Advanced Cell Technology, attempted to clone cows for their liver stem cells. The cloned cow fetuses were implanted and grown in the womb for 3 to 4 months before being aborted so their liver tissue could be harvested. Dr. Lanza said ominously, ''We hope to use this technology in the future to treat patients with diverse diseases.'' He is not talking about cows. He is talking about human beings.

Another researcher, Dr. Smadar Evantov-Friedman of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, conducted research to determine the best ''gestational time windows for the growth of pig embryonic liver, pancreas, and lung precursors.'' They determined that the best windows for tissue ranged from more than 2 months to more than 6 months, and that is 6 months of gestation.

This is not science fiction, Mr. Speaker. This is actual animal research. I have no doubt that Dr. Lanza and Evantov-Friedman and others are not investing enormous amounts of money and talent in research for cures for animals.

And the loopholes to allow fetus farming already exist in State laws. In my home State of New Jersey, a law was enacted in 2004 that defines a cloning ban in such a bizarre way so as to ban it only if the cloned human being is grown to the newborn stage.

Thus, in my State, a cloned embryo could be grown to the later fetal stage and then aborted for research. I would point out parenthetically that many of us raised these issues with our Governor, then Gov. McGreevey. I gave him a letter outlining these concerns about the legislation. They knew that what they were doing would allow the harvesting, the fetus farming of these individuals.

S. 3504 makes it unlawful to solicit or knowingly acquire, receive, or accept a donation of human fetal tissue knowing that a human pregnancy was deliberately initiated to provide such tissue or knowingly acquire or receive or accept tissue or cells obtained from a human embryo or fetus that was gestated in a nonhuman animal.

Fetus farming is dehumanizing. It is a serious violation of human rights. Every human life is precious, Mr. Speaker, and has innate value and dignity. Every human life, regardless of age, maturity or condition of dependency deserves respect. Every human life, no matter how small, deserves protection from harm, inhumane experimentation or slaughter.

□ 1700

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentlewoman from Colorado and the distinguished gentleman from Delaware, and a number of others, along with the cosponsors, of which I am very proud to have been a cosponsor. And I thank the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I rise to acknowledge and support S. 3504. This bill prohibits the harvesting of human fetal tissue or embryos for scientific research, which is consistent with current science research practices anyway. I am delighted to join in and support this moral boundary to prohibit heinous practices that are already law.

At the same time, I would ask that we move quickly to pass H.R. 810, the Castle-DeGette Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act which would expand Federal funding for enormously promising embryonic stem cell research; but more importantly, as those who are languishing in our districts, some who have lost their life, others who are seeking some relief with spinal injuries, if you will, spinal cord injuries, with Parkinson's disease, begging that we move forward on H.R. 810, embryonic stem cell research has the potential to unlock the doors to treatments, diseases, and cures for numerous illnesses, including diabetes, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, Lou Gehrig's Disease, multiple sclerosis, cancer and spinal cord injuries. The very same voice that Nancy Reagan raised, we are raising on this floor.

Embryonic stem cell research could benefit an estimated 100 million Americans, those with these diseases and those having family members with these diseases. More importantly, children who have not seen the future before them could now have an open opportunity.

Senator BILL FRIST said it right: Embryonic stem cells uniquely hold specific promise that adult stem cells cannot provide. Our country's leading scientists and biomedical researchers support H.R. 810. The Santorum-Specter alternative stem cell research bill is no replacement for that bill.

Yes, we can support the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006. We can support it, but I hope we will rush to the floor and support H.R. 810 so Americans might still live.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act. I am under no illusion that this bill will contribute significantly to the advancement of stem cell research.

This bill prohibits the harvesting of human fetal tissue or embryos for scientific research, which is consistent with current scientific research practices anyway. There is no argument that the provisions in this bill would prevent repulsive practices from occurring, but there is also no evidence that these practices would ever occur. By designating this moral boundary, this bill requires researchers to find a way to make stem cells reap the potential benefits while skirting a politically divisive issue.

As a Member of the Science Committee, I am committed to the advancement of science. I believe we should explore creative initiatives and pursue sound research. By demonizing science, we only hurt ourselves and make it more likely that our country will fall behind other countries in the critically important fields of science, technology, and innovation.

For many of us, our driver's license exhibits a tiny red heart, which indicates to any emergency personnel that, God forbid, in a fatal accident, I have voluntarily chosen to be an organ donor. A similar option exists for those who prefer to dedicate themselves to scientific research postmortem.

For those who may not know, the first scientists to successfully separate and grow cultures of stem cells in 1998 utilized discarded tissue. In all cases, it was from an unrelated yet previous decision, such as non-living fetuses obtained from terminated first trimester pregnancies. The distinction is important—this is not sacrificing one life for another, it is the possibility of bringing more life out of a death.

What the authors of this bill call fetal farming, the scientific community calls ''therapeutic cloning.'' Therapeutic cloning involves removing the DNA from an unfertilized human egg and replacing it with DNA from a patient. The egg then divides through mitosis to become a blastocyst. A blastocyst is a clump of several dozen cells that then produces stem cells with DNA identical to the patient.

Though a fetus could not develop in these conditions, many contend that the resulting blastocyst is still a human embryo. It is important to note that the process does not involve a human pregnancy.

Ethical boundaries are crucial to the integrity of science. Naming a bill creatively, on the other hand, and making a big issue out of a non-contentious point does not improve the law.

Unfortunately, however, this simple little bill and its companion, which we are also discussing today, do not weigh the consequences of any of these valid policy discussions. Instead, it does little to advance the very serious and promising area of scientific research that is reflected in H.R. 810; this research is supported by a majority of this House, and hopefully will be reaffirmed by this House later this week.

This bill prohibits the "harvesting" of human fetal tissue or embryos for scientific research, which is consistent with current scientific research practices anyway. There is no argument that the provisions in this bill would prevent repulsive practices from occurring, but there is also no evidence that these practices would ever occur. By designating this moral boundary, this bill requires researchers to find a way to make stem cells reap the potential benefits while skirting a politically divisive issue.

I am not opposed to this Jill, although it does not further scientific research. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of science, scientific research, and the promise of scientific advancement later this week.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT).

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act. As my colleagues know, researchers have already published studies in which cloned animals were grown in utero to harvest fetal tissue. Some researchers have indicated that cells or tissues from human fetuses are more desirable than embryonic stem cells.

It is morally shocking to think that someone would engage in so-called "fetus farming" of a human embryonic embryo. It is essential that Congress act today and pass the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act to prevent and prohibit such gruesome research from ever being performed on a developing human child.

Congress has a moral obligation to protect women and the unborn, and I urge my colleagues to support S. 3504 to do just that.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN).

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Colorado for her leadership on this important issue. I rise today to talk about S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006. Sponsors of this bill say it is necessary to ban the practice of fetal farming, which is the development of embryos for the sole purpose of research in questionable ways.

I support this bill and intend to vote for it, but at the end of the day this bill does little more than ban researchers from taking actions they don't want to take anyway. It does draw a line in the sand which I think is important to have in our law, but it does nothing to advance scientific research in our country. It does nothing to fulfill the promise of stem cell research.

I understand just minutes ago the other body passed H.R. 810, a landmark bill that would allow the kind of research necessary to help tens of millions of Americans who suffer with a genetic sentence of disability or death. H.R. 810, which passed this House last year through an extraordinary bipartisan effort, would apply strict ethical guidelines to and expand Federal funding for the most promising methods of stem cell research.

H.R. 810 is the only bill this Congress has debated that has the potential to truly unlock the doors to treatments and cures for so many who really need them. I am bitterly disappointed that the President has threatened to use his first veto to stop this important scientific progress.

Unfortunately for some, the bill before us now has been a distraction, or worse yet, a source of political cover for those who do not support this landmark bill, H.R. 810.

I urge my colleagues to continue the bipartisan spirit that this House started last year that could be so meaningful to millions of people around this country. Let's continue this work for meaningful progress in stem cell research. Let's not get sidetracked by political gamesmanship. The American people demand it.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are so happy the Senate is working today. It gives us something to do, but I only have one more speaker, the sponsor of the House companion bill, Dr. WELDON.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, we rushed over here literally from the Senate floor. I do have other Members who would like to speak on this bill, but they are not here yet. I intend to close for my side.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. We only have one other speaker, so if you would like to close for your side.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006, which as we mentioned just passed the Senate a few moments ago, is important in the sense that it is Congress' way of saying that we need to ensure that the scientific research that we do is ethical, that what we do to try to cure diseases is always ethical.

I, frankly, very rarely find myself agreeing with people like Mr. SMITH and Mr. WELDON on this issue. But in the case of S. 3504 I do, because I don't agree we should have fetal farming. None of us agree that we should have fetal farming. It is wrong, and it is unethical.

But nobody should again convince themselves that this bill has anything whatsoever to do with the great promise that embryonic stem cell research holds. In addition, S. 2754 which came over here just on the heels of the other legislation, this bill is also attempting to give cover to those who say that they want to support research, but they don't support embryonic stem cell research.

As I will discuss moments from now when we bring up that bill, that bill is no substitute for embryonic stem cell research. In fact, the greatest promise for creating cures to diseases that affect millions of Americans is H.R. 810 which, as we just now learned moments ago again, has now passed the Senate by a solid majority, bipartisan Members who consider themselves pro-choice and Members who consider themselves pro-life. The reason they support embryonic stem cell research is because the vast majority of scientists agree that research holds the cure to potentially curing diseases that affect 110 million Americans and their families.

I have a 13-page letter signed by many, many groups, universities, patient advocacy groups, all kinds of folks, and this letter says: "We, the undersigned patient advocacy groups, health organizations, research universities, scientific societies, religious groups and other interested institutions and associations, representing millions of patients, scientists, health care providers and advocates, write you with our strong and unified support for H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act.

"Of the bills being considered simultaneously, only H.R. 810 will move stem cell research forward in our country. This is the bill which holds promise for expanding medical breakthroughs. The other two bills are not substitutes for a "yes" vote on H.R. 810.

"H.R. 810 is the pro-patient and pro-research bill. A vote in support of H.R. 810 will be considered a vote in support of more than 100 million patients in the U.S. and substantial progress for research."

I include this letter for the RECORD.

JULY 14, 2006.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR: We, the undersigned patient advocacy groups, health organizations, research universities, scientific societies, religious groups and other interested institutions and associations, representing millions of patients, scientists, health care providers and advocates, write you with our strong and unified support for H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. We urge your vote in favor of H.R. 810 when the Senate considers the measure next week.

Of the bills being considered simultaneously, only H.R. 810 will move stem cell research forward in our country. This is the bill which holds promise for expanding medical breakthroughs. The other two bills—the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act (S. 2754) and the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act (S. 3504)—are NOT substitutes for a YES vote on H.R. 810.

H.R. 810 is the pro-patient and pro-research bill. A vote in support of H.R. 810 will be considered a vote in support of more than 100 million patients in the U.S. and substantial progress for research. Please work to pass H.R. 810 immediately.

Sincerely,

AO North America, AAALAC International, AARP, Abbott Laboratories, Acadia Pharmaceuticals, Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis, Adams County Economic Development, Inc., AdvaMed (Advanced Medical Technology Association).

AMDeC-Academic Medicine Development Co., America on the Move Foundation, American Academy of Neurology, American Academy of Nursing, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association for Cancer Research, American Association for Dental Research, American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry, American Association for

the Advancement of Science, American Association of Anatomists, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, American Association of Neurological Surgeons/Congress of Neurological Surgeons, American Association of Public Health Dentistry, American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association, American Brain Coalition, American Chronic Pain Association, American College of Cardiology, American College of Medical Genetics, American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

American Society for Cell Biology, American Society for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, American Society for Microbiology, American Society for Neural Transplantation and Repair, American Society for Nutrition, Affymetrix, Inc., Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University, Alliance for Aging Research, Alliance for Lupus Research, Alliance for Stem Cell Research, Alnylam US, Inc., Alpha-1 Foundation, ALS Association, Ambulatory Pediatric Association, American College of Surgeons, American Council on Education, American Council on Science and Health, American Dental Association, American Dental Education Association, American Diabetes Association, American Federation for Aging Research, American Gastroenterological Association, American Geriatrics Society, American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, American Lung Association, American Medical Association, American Medical Informatics Association, American Medical Women's Association, American Pain Foundation, American Parkinson's Disease Association, American Parkinson's Disease Association (Arizona Chapter), American Pediatric Society, American Physiological Society, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, American Public Health Association, American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, American Society for Bone and Mineral Research, American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, American Society for Reproductive Medicine, American Society for Virology, American Society of Clinical Oncology, American Society of Critical Care Anesthesiologists, American Society of Hematology, American Society of Human Genetics,

American Society of Nephrology, American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, American Surgical Association, American Surgical Association Foundation, American Thoracic Society, American Thyroid Association, American Transplant Foundation, Americans for Medical Progress, amFAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research, Arizona State University College of Nursing, Arthritis Foundation, Arthritis Foundation, Rocky Mountain Chapter, Association for Clinical Research Training, Association for Medical School Pharmacology Chairs, Association for Prevention Teaching and Research, Association for the Accreditation of Human Research, Protection Programs, Inc., Association of Academic Chairs of Emergency Medicine, Association of Academic Departments of Otolaryngology.

Association of Public Health Laboratories, Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry, Association of Specialty Professors, Association of University Anesthesiologists, Assurant Health, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Athena Diagnostics, Aurora Economic Development Council, Axion Research Foundation, B'nai B'rith International, Baylor College of Medicine, Baylor College of Medicine Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Biotechnology Industry Organization, BloodCenter of Wisconsin, Inc., Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation on Health Care, Boston Biomedical Research Institute, Boston University School of Dental Medicine, Boston University School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Broadened Horizons, LLC.

Children's Research Institute (Columbus), Children's Research Institute (Washington), Children's Tumor Foundation, Childrens Hospital Boston, Christopher Reeve Foundation, City and County of Denver, City of Hope National Medical Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilitites, University of Colorado System, Colfax Marathon Partnership, Inc., Colorado Bioscience Association, Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, Colorado State University, Association of Academic Health Centers, Association of Academic Physiatrists, Association of American Medical Colleges, Association of American Physicians, Association of American Universities, Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, Association of Anatomy, Cell Biology and Neurobiology Chairs, Association of Anesthesiology Program Directors, Association of Black Cardiologists, Association of Chairs of Departments of Physiology, Association of Independent Research Institutes, Association of Medical School Microbiology and Immunology Chairs, Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs, Association of Medical School Pharmacology Chairs, Association of Professors of Dermatology, Association of Professors of Human and Medical Genetics, Association of Professors of Medicine, Brown Medical School, Buck Institute for Age Research, Burns & Allen Research Institute, Burrill & Company, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, C3: Colorectal Cancer Coalition, California Biomedical Research Association, California Institute of Technology, California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, California Wellness Foundation, Californians for Cures, Campaign for Medical Research, Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation, Canon U.S. Life Sciences, Inc., Case Western Reserve University School of Dentistry, Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Cedars-Sinai Health System, Center for the Advancement of Health, Central Conference of American Rabbis, CFIDS Association of America, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, Charles River Laboratories, Child & Adolescent Bipolar Foundation, Children's Memorial Research Center, Children's Neurobiological Solutions Foundation, Columbia University, Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, Columbia University Medical Center, Community Health Partnership, Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals, Connecticut United for Research Excellence, Inc., Conquer Fragile X Foundation, Cornell University, Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science, (CANS), Creighton University School of Medicine, CURE (Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy), Cure Alzheimer's Fund, Cure Paralysis Now, CuresNow, Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Dartmouth Medical School, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, DENTSPLY International, Digene Corporation, Discovery Partners International, Doheny Eye Institute, Drexel University College of Medicine, Drexel University School of Public Health, Duke University Medical Center, Dystonia Medical Research Foundation.

FD Hope Foundation, Federation of American Scientists, Federation of American Societies for Experimental, Biology (FASEB), Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, Inc., Fertile Hope, Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority, Florida Atlantic University Division of Research, Ford Finance, Inc., Fox Chase Cancer Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Friends of Cancer Research, Friends of the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research, Friends of the National Institute of Nursing Research, Friends of the National Library of Medicine, Genetic Alliance, Genetics Policy Institute, George Mason University, Georgetown University Medical Center, Guillain Barre Syndrome Foundation International, Gynecologic Cancer Foundation, Hadassah, Harvard University, Harvard University School of Dental Medicine.

Jacobs Institute of Women's Health, Jeffrey Modell Foundation, Johns Hopkins, Johnson & Johnson, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), Joint Steering Committee for Public Policy, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, Kennedy Krieger Institute, Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology, KID Foundation, Kidney Cancer Association, La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology, Lance Armstrong Foundation, Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Georgetown University, Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, East Tennessee State University James H. Quillen College of Medicine, Eli Lilly and Company, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Emory University, Emory University Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University School of Medicine, FasterCures.

Harvard University School of Public Health, Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute, Inc., Hereditary Disease Foundation, HHT Foundation International, Inc., Home Safety Council, Howard University College of Dentistry, Howard University College of Medicine, Huntington's Disease Society of America, IBM Life Sciences Division, Illinois State University Mennonite College of Nursing, ImmunoGen, Inc., Indiana University School of Dentistry, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indiana University School of Nursing, Infectious Diseases Society of America, Institute for African American Health, Inc., Intercultural Cancer Council Caucus, International Foundation for Anticancer Drug, Discovery (IFADD), International Longevity Center—USA, International Society for Stem Cell Research, Invitrogen Corporation, Iraq Veterans for Cures, Iris Alliance Fund, Iron Disorders Institute.

Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center School of Dentistry, Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute, Loyola University of Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, Lung Cancer Alliance, Lupus Foundation of America, Inc., Lupus Foundation of Colorado, Inc., Lupus Research Institute, Lymphatic Research Foundation, Mailman School of Public Health of Columbia University, Malecare Prostate Cancer Support, March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, Marine Biological Laboratory, Marshalltown [IA] Cancer Resource Center, Masonic Medical Research Laboratory, Massachusetts Biotechnology Council, Massachusetts General Hospital, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MaxCyte, Inc., McLaughlin Research Institute, Medical College of Georgia, Medical University of South Carolina, Medical University of South Carolina College of Nursing, MedStar Research Institute (MRI), Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry.

Miami Children's Hospital, Midwest Nursing Research Society, Morehouse School of

Medicine, Mount Sinai Medical Center, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression, National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Alopecia Areata Foundation, National Asian Women's Health Organization, National Association for Biomedical Research, National Association of Hepatitis Task Forces, National Caucus of Basic Biomedical Science Chairs, National Coalition for Cancer Research, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, National Committee for Quality Health Care, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council on Spinal Cord Injury, National Down Syndrome Society, National Electrical Manufacturers Association, National Foundation for Ectodermal Dysplasias.

New York Presbyterian Hospital, North American Brain Tumor Coalition, North Carolina Association for Biomedical Research, Northwest Association for Biomedical Research, Northwestern University, Northwestern University, The Feinberg School of Medicine, Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine, Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, Oral Health America, Oregon Health & Science University, Oregon Health & Science University School of Nursing, Oregon Research Institute, Oxford Bioscience Partners, Pacific Health Research Institute, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy, Parkinson's Action Network, Parkinson's Disease Foundation, Partnership for Prevention, Pennsylvania Society for Biomedical Research, Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.

Society for Male Reproduction and Urology, Society for Neuroscience, Society for Pediatric Research, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Memory Pharmaceuticals, Mercer University, Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation.

National Health Council, National Hemophilia Foundation, National Hispanic Health Foundation, National Jewish Medical and Research Center, National Marfan Foundation, National Medical Association, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, National Osteoporosis Foundation, National Partnership for Women and Families, National Pharmaceutical Council, National Prostate Cancer Coalition, National Quality Forum, National Spinal Cord Injury Association, National Venture Capital Association, Nebraskans for Research, Nemours, New Jersey Association for Biomedical Research, New Jersey Dental School, New York Blood Center, New York College of Osteopathic Medicine, New York State Association of County Health Officials, New York Stem Cell Foundation, New York University College of Dentistry, New York University School of Medicine, Pittsburgh Development Center, Princeton University, Project A.L.S., Prostate Cancer Foundation, Pseudoxanthoma Elasticum International, Quest for the Cure, RAND Health, Research!America, Resolve: The National Infertility Association, RetireSafe, Rett Syndrome Research Foundation, Rice University, Robert Packard Center for ALS Research at Johns Hopkins, The Rockefeller University, Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, Rush University Medical Center, Rutgers University, Salk Institute for Biological Studies, sanofi-aventis, Scleroderma Research Foundation, Secular Coalition for America, Sjogren's Syndrome Foundation, Inc., Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury, Research (SAVIR), Society for Assisted Reproductive Technology, Society for Education in Anesthesia Society for Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Society for Women's Health Research, Society of Academic Anesthesiology Chairs, Society of General Internal Medicine, Society of Gynecologic Oncologists, Society of Reproductive Surgeons, Society of University Otolaryngologists, South Alabama Medical Science Foundation, South Dakota State University, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Spina Bifida Association of America, Stanford University, State University of New York at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine, State University of New York Downstate Medical, Center College of Medicine at Brooklyn, State University of New York Upstate Medical University, Stem Cell Action Network, Stem Cell Research Foundation, Steven and Michele Kirsch Foundation, Stony Brook University, State University of New York, Strategic Health Policy International, Inc., Student Society for Stem Cell Research, Suicide Prevention Action Network-USA (SPAN), Take Charge! Cure Parkinson's, Inc.

The Georgetown University Center for the Study of Sex Difference in Health, Aging and Disease, The Gerontological Society of America, The J. David Gladstone Institutes, The Jackson Laboratory, The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health, The Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, The Medical College of Wisconsin, The Medical Foundation, Inc., The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, The Ohio State University College of Dentistry, The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Public Health, The Ohio State University School of Public Health, The Parkinson Alliance and Unity Walk, The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc., The Rockefeller University, The Schepens Eye Research Institute, The Scientist, The Scripps Research Institute, The Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Institute, The Society for Investigative Dermatology, The Spiral Foundation, The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, The University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine.

University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Nursing, University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Public Health, University of Arizona College of Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, University of Buffalo, Targacept, Inc., Temple University School of Dentistry, Texans for Advancement of Medical Research, Texas A&M University Health Science Center, Texas Medical Center, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, The Arc of the United States, The Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology, The Biophysical Society, The Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, The Burnham Institute, The CJD Foundation, The Critical Path Institute (C-Path), The Endocrine Society, The FAIR Foundation, The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, The Food Allergy Project, Inc., The Forsyth Institute, The Foundation Fighting Blindness, The George Washington University Medical Center.

The University of Iowa College of Dentistry, The University of Iowa College of Public Health, The University of Mississippi Medical Center, The University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Dentistry, The University of Oklahoma College of Dentistry, The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, The University of Tennessee Health Science Center, The University of Tennessee HSC College of Nursing, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston School of Medicine, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, The University of Toledo Academic Health Science Center, Tourette Syndrome Association, Travis Roy Foundation, Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, Tulane University, Tulane University Health Sciences Center, Union for Reformed Judaism, Union of Concerned Scientists, Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, United Spinal Association, University of California System, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley School of Public Health, University of California, Davis, University of California, Irvine, University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, Los Angeles School of Dentistry, University of California, Los Angeles School of Medicine, University of California, San Diego, University of California, San Francisco, University of California, San Francisco School of Dentistry, University of California, San Francisco School of Nursing, University of California, Santa Cruz, University of Chicago, University of Cincinnati Medical Center, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, University of Colorado at Denver and HSC School of Dentistry, University of Colorado at Denver and HSC School of Nursing, University of Connecticut School of Medicine, University of Florida, University of Florida College of Dentistry, University of Georgia, University of Illinois.

University of Michigan School of Dentistry, University of Michigan School of Nursing, University of Michigan School of Public Health, University of Minnesota, University of Minnesota School of Public Health, University of Missouri at Kansas City School of Dentistry, University of Montana School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences, University of Nebraska Medical Center, University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry, University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine, University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Public Health, University of North Dakota, University of North Texas Health Science Center, University of Oregon, University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine, WE MOVE, Weill Medical College of Cornell University, Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, WiCell Research Institution, Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing, University of Iowa, University of Kansas, University of Kansas Medical Center, University of Kansas Medical Center School of Nursing, University of Kentucky, University of Kentucky College of Dentistry, University of Louisville, University of Louisville School of Dentistry, University of Maryland at Baltimore, University of Maryland at Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, University of Maryland at Baltimore School of Nursing, University of Miami, University of Michigan, University of Michigan College of Pharmacy, University of Michigan Medical School.

University of Rochester Medical Center, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Rochester School of Nursing, University of South Carolina Office of Research and Health Sciences,

University of South Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, University of South Florida, University of South Florida College of Nursing, University of Southern California, University of Southern California School of Dentistry, University of Utah HSC School of Medicine, University of Vermont College of Medicine, University of Washington, University of Washington School of Dentistry, University of Washington School of Nursing, University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Van Andel Research Institute, Vanderbilt University and Medical Center, Vanderbilt University School of Nursing, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Washington University in St. Louis, Washington University in St. Louis Center for Health Policy, Wisconsin Association for Biomedical Research and Education, Woodruff Health Sciences Center at Emory University, Wright State University School of Medicine, Yale University, Yale University School of Medicine, Yale University School of Nursing.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, many have said that adult stem cell research can be a substitute for embryonic stem cell research. To those people I would say that is simply not true. I support adult stem cell research. I support cord blood research. I support anything that could help cure all of the diseases that affect Americans.

But those who say adult stem cell research will be a substitute are demagoguing that issue for political gain and that is wrong.

Dr. Harold Varmus summarized it for all of the hundreds of researchers and the people who have done studies when he said just this week: ''Compared to adult stem cells, embryonic stem cells have a much greater potential, according to all existing scientific literature.''

Some researchers have said well, maybe we can find cures through adult stem cell research. Some researchers have said maybe we could do embryonic stem cell research in alternative ways, but those methods have shown no promise whatsoever.

By way of contrast, recently researchers were able to create beta cells in mouse pancreases which then became insulin-producing islet cells. Even more recently, researchers were able to take embryonic stem cells and make nerve cells to help with nerve damage and paralysis. Adult stem cells cannot be used for that purpose.

So in fact, the only promise for many diseases like the ones I mentioned, is embryonic stem cell research. That is why, Mr. Speaker, it is all well and good if people want to vote for S. 3504. It is all well and good if they want to say they support these other kinds of research, but in truth the only research that the tens of millions of Americans will rely on is embryonic stem cell research.

In closing, our President has said that he will veto this legislation, H.R. 810, and sign S. 3504. I will say this to the President: In 6 years in office, over 1,600 bills he has signed, he has signed bills that make our budget deficit the worst in our country. He has signed bills that allow us to go to war against other nations. He has signed post office namings, and so many other bills. This bill, MIKE CASTLE and I, we drafted this bill to be very narrow.

□ 1715

We only allowed embryos which are created to give life for in vitro fertilization clinics and are then slated to be destroyed as medical waste to be donated voluntarily by the donors to be used for embryonic stem cell research. This is the pro-life alternative. This is the alternative that lets people, once they have had their babies for in vitro fertilization, say, I don't want my embryos thrown away. I want them used for medical research. I want those embryos to be used to save lives.

I just have one personal thing to say in closing. When people say that a 12-celled embryo is more important than patients today, I think of my 12-year-old daughter who suffers from type I diabetes. I think of the medical test that she does every day, sticking her finger. I think of the insulin that she must have to stay alive, and I say to the President, and I say to those that think that those embryos are more important than they are, I say, you know, come walk in her shoes for a day.

Come walk in the shoes of LANE EVANS, our colleague who cannot appear on this floor because of his debilitating illness.

Come walk in the shoes, unfortunately you couldn't walk in the shoes of our colleague, JIM LANGEVIN, who was paralyzed in a tragic gun accident and never walked again. And you tell all of those people that an embryo which is going to be thrown away for medical waste is more important than those people.

And that is why tens of millions of people will be watching this vote, and tens of millions of people will be watching the President this week. I suggest that the most important vote we can take is a vote for life and a vote for 810.

I want to thank my colleagues in the House for passing this bill. It was a bipartisan effort. And I want to urge them to think about that later this week if, as expected, a veto override vote comes to the floor.

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

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, to close on this very important piece of legislation, I yield to the House sponsor of the companion bill, Dr. DAVE WELDON of Florida.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman BARTON. And I particularly want to thank the cosponsor of this legislation, Subcommittee Chairman DEAL. And I am certainly pleased that this legislation that we introduced passed the Senate unanimously. I fully expect something similar here in the House.

This bill, and I just want to point out to my colleagues, we are not revoting H.R. 810. We are talking about the bill to ban the procedure called fetal farming. And we are taking up the Senate version of the bill, which is a verbatim equivalent to the bill that Mr. DEAL and I introduced.

This bill sets a very, very important ethical boundary for biomedical research in this country, and obviously there is an ethical boundary that today we all agree on. It is a modest, but important, update to the Waxman 1993 fetal tissue research prohibitions.

These laws, as developed in the 1990s, attempt to protect women from being coerced into having an abortion for the purpose of providing fetal tissue for research. What they were trying to do is say you can only use voluntarily aborted fetal tissue. Then, as now, the concern was that women would be exploited. Because of this, in my bill the researchers are held accountable, not any woman who may be engaged in this procedure.

My bill adds a simple provision that would hold researchers criminally liable for intentionally implanting a human embryo, either in a womb or in an animal womb, for the purpose of harvesting the tissue for research.

Otherwise, the Waxman language is the same. It stays the same. The criminal penalties are the same. The definition of the fetus is the same.

When Congressman WAXMAN originally developed these laws, the thought of fetus farming hadn't even crossed our minds. Even now, most of us and most scientists would say that fetus farming is unthinkable. Science Magazine, in their reporting on the bill, stated, this bill, the one we are debating now, not H.R. 810, that fetus farming was ''ethically taboo for any legitimate researcher.''

However, what I want to get into now, and that is the reason I have the posters, this is the reason I have introduced this legislation. It may be considered taboo now, but I don't know if it will still be considered taboo in 2 or 3 or 4 years. And the way these things usually progress is they start doing it in animals and it shows a little bit of maybe potential, and then people start saying, we can cure diabetes and Parkinson's disease if we just start doing this in humans. And that is the direction they want to go.

Now, this was the first study that caught my attention, and as I have stated many times on the floor of this Chamber, I am a physician. I still see patients once a month. I have treated diabetes and Parkinson's. My uncle died of complications of Parkinson's. My father died of complications of diabetes. I have dealt with this as a professional. I have dealt with this in my family.

What they did is this is a cow study, and I would be happy to provide this to anybody. They did cloning, but then they took the cloned embryos, put them in a cow, and cardiac and skeletal tissue from 5- to 6-week-old cloned natural fetuses were used in this study,

and they tried to show that it had some therapeutic potential.

This was a second one, a cow study where they did the exact same thing, cloning, and they put it in a cow and they grew it into the fetal stage. And that is because embryonic stem cells are really a hassle to work with. It is really easier to use fetal tissue. And that is one of the arguments I have been making ever since I introduced my original bill to ban human cloning.

If you don't think scientists want to start doing this, here it is. This is one of the researchers involved with this. He says, ''We hope to use this technology in the future to treat patients with diverse diseases.'' And that is usually the way we go. We say, oh, this is ethically taboo. Oh, we don't want to do this. And then somebody with a Ph.D. on the end of their name comes along and says, we are going to be able to cure this and cure that, even though there is very little evidence, scientifically, to say that the cures will be there or at least, like in the case of human embryonic stem cell research, most credible researchers in moments of honesty will acknowledge it is 10 to 20 years, if ever, going to be applicable.

But that is what they will do. They will say we are going to cure this. We are going to cure that.

So I am very grateful the Senate voted unanimously. I fully expect this bill to pass overwhelmingly on suspension. And we will draw a line in the sand to say we are not going to take this whole area of tissue therapies into the realm of where we are exploiting fetuses.

Today, there is a majority in both bodies that want to exploit embryos. But we are saying collectively, as a Nation, through the votes of the Members of both Chambers, that we are not going to start exploiting fetuses. I think it is the right thing for us to do, and I am very, very pleased at the expedited action on this bill.

And, again, I want to thank Chairman BARTON and particularly my cosponsor, Chairman DEAL.

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act.

This critical legislation will help prevent the dangerous potential for creation of human ''fetus farms'' to harvest children's tissues and organs for medical research. It would make it a federal crime punishable by up to ten years in prison to knowingly buy or sell human fetal tissue from a pregnancy deliberately initiated for the purpose of harvesting organs and tissues.

Unless S. 3504 is enacted, the potential for exploitation of women and children is tremendous. Animal research has already been conducted that raises severe ethical concerns for application in humans. For example, Advanced Cell Technology attempted to clone cow fetuses, implanted the fetuses within a womb and grew them for three to four months before aborting the cows to harvest their liver tissue for research. In addition, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology cloned and grew mouse fetuses to correct an immune deficiency, but the research was only successful when the mouse was aborted at the newborn stage for cell harvesting.

Some researchers have already indicated that cells or tissues from human fetuses are more desirable than embryonic stem cells because they are more developed and adaptable for transplantation. While the biotechnology industry claims no interest in maintaining cloned human embryos past 14 days, it has supported State laws such as the New Jersey law which allows ''fetus farming'' into the ninth month of pregnancy to harvest more developed organs and tissues. The potential to pay women to act as incubators for children to be grown and aborted for ''research'' is easily seen. S. 3504 would prevent this horrific situation, and I am proud President Bush has agreed to sign this legislation into law upon passage by Congress today.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting S. 3504 to uphold human life and protect women and children from exploitation in unethical research.

Mr. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I support S. 3504 because I think it is essential to have the strictest of guidelines that reflect our Nation's values regarding the creation and responsible treatment of human embryos.

Having said this, if we pass this bill without also enacting legislation to allow for federally funded and regulated stem cell research, we are saying ''no'' to the potential of life saving treatments for millions of Americans who suffer from diseases for which there are currently limited or no treatment options.

Later this week, the House will likely vote on H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, a bill which puts into place critical federal support for embryonic research under the strictest ethical requirements, and I'm proud to be an original cosponsor of this bill.

Under H.R. 810 embryonic stem cell lines will be eligible for research funding only if embryos used to derive stem cells were originally created for fertility treatment purposes, are in excess of clinical need, and are donated for the purpose of research.

H.R. 810 will bring embryonic stem cell research under the National Institutes of Health, ensuring rigorous controls and ethical guidelines on this research that only NIH can impose. We have a moral imperative to ensure that this research is conducted in adherence to sound medical, ethical, and moral guidelines.

The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act will advance medical science and will almost certainly save lives and provide hope to millions of Americans afflicted with suffering from diseases and injuries, including Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, heart disease, and spinal injuries.

Without federal funding and standards, scientific progress will move overseas and Americans' access to the most important medical innovations will be limited.

I join Dr. FRIST, the Senate Republican leader, in support of this bill, as well the governor of California, Governor Schwarzenegger, who has asked the President to withhold his veto.

The Federal Government has a key role to lead, to encourage and to assist in the cutting-edge research which can and will save the lives of our citizens.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 810 and support stem cell research, and I implore the President to reconsider his pledge to veto this crucial legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 3504.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. 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 question will be postponed.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 810. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for human embryonic stem cell research.

ALTERNATIVE PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL THERAPIES ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 2754) to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 2754

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 ''Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSES.

It is the purpose of this Act to—

(1) intensify research that may result in improved understanding of or treatments for diseases and other adverse health conditions; and

(2) promote the derivation of pluripotent stem cell lines, including from postnatal sources, without creating human embryos for research purposes or discarding, destroying, or knowingly harming a human embryo or fetus.

SEC. 3. ALTERNATIVE HUMAN PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL RESEARCH.

Part B of title IV of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 284 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 498C the following:

''SEC. 409J. ALTERNATIVE HUMAN PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL RESEARCH.

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with section 492, the Secretary shall conduct and support basic and applied research to develop techniques for the isolation, derivation, production, or testing of stem cells that, like embryonic stem cells, are capable of producing all or almost all of the cell types of the developing body and may result in improved understanding of or treatments for diseases and other adverse health conditions, but are not derived from a human embryo.

''(b) GUIDELINES.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary, after consultation with

the Director, shall issue final guidelines to implement subsection (a), that—

''(1) provide guidance concerning the next steps required for additional research, which shall include a determination of the extent to which specific techniques may require additional basic or animal research to ensure that any research involving human cells using these techniques would clearly be consistent with the standards established under this section;

''(2) prioritize research with the greatest potential for near-term clinical benefit; and

''(3) consistent with subsection (a), take into account techniques outlined by the President's Council on Bioethics and any other appropriate techniques and research.

''(c) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—Not later than January 1 of each year, the Secretary shall prepare and submit to the appropriate committees of the Congress a report describing the activities carried out under this section during the fiscal year, including a description of the research conducted under this section.

''(d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect any policy, guideline, or regulation regarding embryonic stem cell research, human cloning by somatic cell nuclear transfer, or any other research not specifically authorized by this section.

''(e) DEFINITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term 'human embryo' shall have the meaning given such term in the applicable appropriations Act.

''(2) APPLICABLE ACT.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the term 'applicable appropriations Act' means, with respect to the fiscal year in which research is to be conducted or supported under this section, the Act making appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services for such fiscal year, except that if the Act for such fiscal year does not contain the term referred to in paragraph (1), the Act for the previous fiscal year shall be deemed to be the applicable appropriations Act.

''(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2009, to carry out this section.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on the bill.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my support for the alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapy Enhancement Act. Now, that is a mouthful.

As an advocate of increased funding for health care research, I am eager to support legislation that would continue funding for this groundbreaking research that shows great promise for translating research into real cures for people who suffer from debilitating illnesses like diabetes and Parkinson's.

As I have said in the past on this floor, I feel strongly that Congress should do its best without delay to ensure that our American citizens benefit from the latest advancements in medical research. Great advancements are possible from research on adult stem cells and other pluripotent cells, and such research should be encouraged.

This legislation would provide valuable dollars to promote stem cell research into new and promising areas. And it should be recognized as an important compromise measure that addresses the many ethical issues deeply held by many Members in this body on both sides of the issue that are associated with the question of Federal funding for stem cell research.

With this legislation, the important research can continue to expand. With time, I am hopeful that we will see some of the miracle cures that all of us have been so fervently praying for for many years.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my colleagues will seize the opportunity to advance scientific and medical research in a morally ethical way by voting in favor of S. 2754.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to myself.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to S. 2754, the so-called Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act.

This bill may seem innocuous on its face. It just tells the Secretary of HHS to research these alternative therapies. But, in fact, it has several key problems. The first one is it sets a disturbing precedent. The bill requires the Secretary of HHS to conduct research into so-called alternative therapies. These therapies, however, do not exist. And they would shift precious resources from the NIH into this fake research that doesn't really exist.

Secondly, as a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I am very concerned when we direct the NIH to pursue one type of research over another. Congress never directs the course of research.

Imagine if we told the NIH, Congress, I guess because we are the uber researchers now, to pursue one type of cancer research over another type of cancer research.

Thirdly, alternative methods for creating pluripotent stem cells are not a real scientific prospect at this time.

As I mentioned during the debate on the last piece of legislation, these types of research have been hypothesized from time to time, but no one has actually had any clinical application. The only promise has been shown in embryonic stem cell research.

Frankly, this bill does worse than nothing. This bill diverts attention and resources away from embryonic stem cell research, which is the research that really shows promise for diseases that affect tens of millions of people, diseases like nerve damage, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and so many others.

I support all legitimate research, but Congress and the White House should not be giving false hope to patients across America who just want to have cures for their diseases.

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

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

I rise in support of this legislation, which will allow funding for research that is already showing some real promise and, at the same time, avoids the moral and ethical perils of research involving the destruction of human embryos.

Pluripotent cells have the ability to grow into any cell in the body. Like other stem cells, pluripotent cells are used in the treatment of debilitating conditions where the replacement of damaged or malfunctioning cells is needed. Using adult stem cells drawn from bone marrow and umbilical cord blood system cells, scientists have discovered new treatments for scores of diseases and conditions such as Parkinson's disease, juvenile diabetes, and spinal cord injuries. Thousands of people have already benefited from these advances; and with continued research, thousands more stand to benefit in the near future.

□ 1730

The success of these treatments shows the merit of adult stem cell research and demonstrates the need for further research.

Last year Congress took action in this area by passing the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005. As a cosponsor of that legislation, it was a bill which expanded the number of stem cell options available to Americans suffering from life-threatening diseases.

Today's legislation will allow us to take another step forward and open up even more avenues for promising research for individuals and families.

The concerns with embryonic stem cell research are real and deeply held by many Americans. But Americans are not the only ones who have reservations about moving forward with research that destroys human embryos. In fact, many nations currently refuse to support embryonic stem cell research of any kind. And last year the United Nations adopted a resolution declaring a prohibition on ''all forms of human cloning inasmuch as they are incompatible with human dignity and the protection of human life.'' Voting along with the United States on this strong declaration were 84 nations, including Germany, Austria, Australia, Italy, and Portugal.

The legislation before us today upholds these principles and will help to further establish our Nation's leadership in ethical and effective scientific research.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) and the prime cosponsor of H.R. 810.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I do rise in opposition to S. 2754, which is the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act. This is authored by good friends and people I respect greatly, Senator SANTORUM and Senator SPECTER and particularly the gentleman in this House who is here on the floor, Mr. BARTLETT, for whom I have great admiration. But I have looked at it considerably, and after many discussions with him and others, I disagree this is the way to go about this, and I must oppose it.

Put simply, the legislation mandates the National Institutes of Health to support highly speculative research, some of which has been deemed unethical by the President's own Bioethics Council, and this mandated research may violate current law because embryos will be destroyed with Federal dollars.

While I appreciate the fact that this legislation acknowledges the very real fact that embryonic stem cells have more potential for treatments and cures than adult stem cell research, and I think that is a very important point, I might add, this legislation is a delay to cures. Why is it a delay? It requires researchers to develop new ways to create or isolate embryonic stem cells before the research with embryonic stem cells can even begin. So you add a whole additional step to the process. And in speaking with Dr. Leon Kass, the former director of the President's Bioethics Council, it could take years to develop these isolation techniques, which means the research is being held up even further.

Why not go with the tried and true method of isolating embryonic stem cells from 5-day-old blastocysts created for the purposes of IVF, no bigger than the tip of a pencil, that would never be implanted in a woman and are slated for medical waste. And then let the research begin immediately.

It would be one thing if these methods were scientifically proven, but they are not. And if they are not, they may never be. My friend from Maryland may talk about single-cell biopsy and its promise in mouse stem cell research, but the Bioethics Council deemed that particular procedure unethical as well because it may very well lead to the destruction of the embryos.

Why not leave the current law alone? The National Institutes of Health can already fund research grants examining alternative methods of derivation. In other words, most of this can be done without being mandated. There is absolutely no reason to mandate this research.

I ask my friends who support embryonic stem cell research to vote against this legislation. It is a distraction for the NIH. It is a distraction for our researchers. And it is a delay to cures, which is most important. The only legislation which provides a direct path to potential cures is H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. Put together, this bill would mandate research, some of which the President's own Bioethics Council has concluded is unethical. And for those who have raised this issue repeatedly, it permits the possibility of destroying embryos as part of the mandated research.

I would encourage all in the House to oppose this legislation.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT).

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I participated in a news conference with about a dozen Snowflake babies who were adopted as embryos, along with five colleagues who are medical doctors. Very few media came to see these children and record their smiles, squirms, dancing, and other delightful antics. How can anyone look at them and say that it would have been okay to kill them to produce stem cell lines? I can state unequivocally that it is morally reprehensible and scientifically unnecessary to kill human embryos to provide raw fodder for scientific research.

For the vast majority of scientists and medial researchers, pluripotent stem cells hold the most promise for understanding human diseases and treating devastating conditions. That is why they are coveted.

To some, the manner in which these pluripotent stem cells would be obtained under the Castle-DeGette bill, by using taxpayers' dollars to kill a human embryo, is secondary to the hope for cures that they represent to sick patients.

To me and millions of other Americans, deliberately taking the lives of innocent human embryos is an unacceptable trade-off. A number of scientists have now proven what I have argued for the past 5 years. It is scientifically unnecessary to destroy human embryos to obtain pluripotent stem cells. Indeed, at least one procedure is almost immediately ready for human clinical application.

The Bartlett-Santorum bill represents common ground into promising ways the Federal Government can support pluripotent stem cell research without sacrificing life for medicine.

The Bartlett-Santorum bill will amend the Public Health Service Act to require NIH to conduct and support basic and applied research to develop techniques for the isolation, derivation, production, or testing of stem cells that have pluripotent or embryonic-like qualities. It was approved by the Senate earlier today by a unanimous recorded vote of 100–0.

''It's surprising what you can accomplish when no one is concerned about who gets the credit.'' Ronald Reagan, 1989.

President Bush will sign the Bartlett-Santorum bill into law because it meets his ethical standards for promoting pluripotent stem cell research without the creation of human embryos for research purposes or discarding, destroying, or knowingly harming a human embryo or fetus. I am proud of President Bush's unwavering defense of the sanctity of life. I am grateful for his support and the support of my colleagues for ethical pluripotent stem cell research.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure I am actually speaking on the right bill, and I am speaking to the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act, and I thank my colleague from Colorado for yielding.

I do rise in opposition to a politically motivated bill brought to this House today to provide cover for certain Members who have tough elections ahead of them. It seems really simple: Vote for one type of stem cell research and then you can oppose another. This way you can appeal to voters on both sides of the issue.

But this bill is rather meaningless because there is nothing preventing researchers now from conducting research on stem cells derived from sources other than embryos.

I wish to enter into the RECORD a letter from the American Society for Cell Biology, which contains 27 signatories including Nobel Prize winners, chancellors of universities, researchers from across this country who are opposing this legislation not because it is evil but because it is a waste of resources.

The truth is there exists no way to extract embryonic stem cells without then having to discard those embryos, which, by the design of the underlying legislation, would have been discarded anyway. This would not be done without the expressed approval of the donating parent.

If you truly support giving hope to the millions of Americans who suffer today from diseases like ALS, cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, then you support feasible embryonic stem cell research that can be done today.

And those of you who claim that there is no hope for stem cell research are wrong. NIH-funded research, limited as it currently is, has already shown definite progress in this area. In the case of heart disease, scientists have been able to successfully use stem cells to create and transplant living heart cells in rats. The promise of these advancements for the human heart is incredible. This is surely a pro-life piece of legislation if there ever was one.

And there are so many more examples of the lifesaving potential of the

stem cell research we already know about, but our scientific researchers only need the resources to do this.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in voting ''no'' on this bill as a show of support for enactment into law of H.R. 810, voted for in a bipartisan way in this House, today voted for in the Senate. This is what the American people want. This is what we have supported. This is the only vehicle by which we can ensure expanded stem cell research and the ability to save lives.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR CELL BIOLOGY,
Bethesda, MD, July 17, 2006.

Hon. ORRIN HATCH,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR HATCH: The Senate will shortly be considering legislation to permit the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to fund research with additional and new and existing human embryonic stem cell (hESC) lines. As staunch supporters of biomedical research and particularly research with hESCs, we trust that you will exert your influence to ensure passage of H.R. 810. Scientists engaged in ESC research are counting on you and like-minded Senate colleagues to assure its passage.

The President must also be persuaded not to veto this legislation, for if we continue on the path he set 5 years ago, United States investigators will be out of the running in converting embryonic stem cells into important new therapies. It is especially frustrating and demeaning that American scientists are prohibited from using their NIH grant funds for research with the hundreds of hESC lines generated outside the United States or generated in this country with private funding.

Also, S. 2754, the ''Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act,'' sponsored by Senators SPECTER and SANTORUM, seems to us, superfluous. Ostensibly, it is intended to authorize research ''to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not harm embryos.'' However, at present, such research is currently permissible and, therefore, does not require congressional legislation; indeed, the National Institutes of Health may currently be funding such efforts.

Moreover, all the alternative procedures advanced in the report by the President's Council on Bioethics and other alternative methods that have been suggested encounter equally vexing ethical concerns. Hence, S. 2754 is unneeded and if passed would deflect from the current urgent need for generating new stem cell lines from excess IVF-derived blastocysts.

Sincerely,

Peter Agre, M.D., Vice Chancellor for Science and Technology, James B. Duke Professor of Cell Biology, Duke University School of Medicine, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 2003; Bruce Alberts, Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics, University of California, San Francisco, President Emeritus, National Academy of Sciences; Mary C. Beckerle, Ph.D., Ralph E. and Willia T. Main, Presidential Professor, University of Utah, President, American Society for Cell Biology; David Baltimore, President, California Institute of Technology, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1975; Paul Berg, Cahill Professor of Biochemistry, Emeritus, Stanford University, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1980; J. Michael Bishop, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1989; Helen M. Blau, Ph.D., Donald E. and Delia B. Baxter, Professor, Director, Baxter Laboratory in Genetic Pharmacology, Stanford University School of Medicine.

Michael S. Brown, MD, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1985; Linda Buck, Ph.D., Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Division of Basic Sciences, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2004; Johann Deisenhofer, Regental Professor, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1988; Joseph L. Goldstein, M.D., Regental Professor of Molecular Genetics and Internal Medicine, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1985; Larry Goldstein, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine, University of California, San Diego School of Medicine; Alfred G. Gilman, M.D., Ph.D., Dallas, Texas, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1994; Paul Greengard, Professor, The Rockefeller University, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2000; Lee Hartwell, Ph.D., President & Director, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2001; Dudley Herschbach, Baird Research Professor of Science, Harvard University, Nobel Prize in Chemistry, 1986.

H. Robert Horvitz, Professor of Biology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2002; Douglas Koshland, Carnegie Institution, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Paul C. Lauterbur, Center for Advanced Study Professor of Chemistry & Distinguished Professor of Medical Information Sciences, University of Illinois, Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, 2003; Sean J. Morrison, Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Director, Center for Stem Cell Biology, University of Michigan; Eric N. Olson, Department of Molecular Biology, University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas; Thomas D. Pollard, MD, Sterling Professor and Chair, Molecular Cellular and Developmental Biology, Yale University; Randy Schekman, HHMI Investigator, Dept. of Molecular and Cell Biology, University of California, Berkeley; Phillip A. Sharp, Institute Professor and Center for Cancer Research, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1993; Maxine F. Singer, A.B., Ph.D., D.Sc., President Emerita, Carnegie Institution of Washington; Harold Varmus, MD, President, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Chair, Joint Steering Committee for Public Policy, Former Director, National Institutes of Health, Nobel Laureate in Medicine or Physiology, 1989; Eric Wieschaus, Department of Molecular Biology, Princeton University, Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 1995.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE).

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, many of us have been impacted, directly or indirectly, by diseases like juvenile diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, Lou Gehrig's disease, and so on. I have friends, as many people here do, who have had these diseases, and my heart goes out to these families. And on the other hand, many oppose embryonic stem cell research because they see the embryo as a human life, which I do as well.

So where do we go with this? I mean on the one hand we are going to create a huge problem for those who believe in life beginning at conception, and we have a desire to also help people who need the stem cell research that think that these are the solutions. So I would differ with some of my friends here, in that the British have done more than 2,000 replications where they have extracted stem cells without destroying the embryo. It has been done. This is not something that has never occurred before. This is not pie in the sky. This is a very real possibility to resolve this dilemma: Are you going to try to preserve human life, as many of us who are pro-life see it, and also have stem cell research? The Senate saw it 100–0. So why over here now, in order to pass a particular bill, are we trying to destroy this bill? It makes no sense to me.

So with that, I certainly urge passage of Senate 2754.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would just correct the gentleman from Nebraska. I was in England over the Memorial Day recess, meeting with all of the major researchers. None of them have found clinical application in just taking cells out of embryos. They all agree that embryonic stem cell research shows the most promise.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY).

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and for her great work on this issue.

The real debate here today in Congress is about whether or not the President is going to veto the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act.

What the Republicans have done is to bring out so many red herrings that we might as well put an aquarium out here in the well of the House. It is to distract. It is to divert.

The central issue is whether or not this body this week is going to vote for a victory for science, a victory for progress, a victory for millions of Americans who are struggling to survive in the face of a devastating disease. This bill, as it passes the House and has already passed the Senate and we vote on it later on this week, is a magnificent milestone in our journey to realizing the life-giving potential of stem cells. Twenty-one million Americans have diabetes; 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer's; 1.5 million Americans suffer from Parkinson's disease; and more than 1 million people in our country have muscular dystrophy. You can go down the list: spinal cord, heart disease. You can go through all of those diseases. Just take one, Alzheimer's. By the time all of the baby boomers have retired, 15 million Americans will have had Alzheimer's, 15 million baby boomers.

Embryonic stem cell research is one of the most promising paths to the treatment and cure of all of these devastating diseases.

□ 1745

Nevertheless, President Bush is now threatening to use his very first veto to prevent scientists from using Federal funds to search for these cures. He is threatening to use his very first veto to dash the hopes of patients and their families.

Research is medicine's field of dreams from which we harvest the findings that give new knowledge to the causes, the treatment and prevention of disease and the development of cures. Hope is what this debate is all about. Hope is the most powerful four-letter word in the English language, and I have no doubt that, in the end, hope is going to win.

But if we don't, if President Bush is successful, we will be snuffing out that flickering candle for medical cures that has just been lit. We will be condemning the afflicted to another generation of darkness. We will be ending the hope for a child with muscular dystrophy, who can't understand why his body is getting weaker while his friends are getting stronger, a veteran with spinal cord injury, a spouse who watches her husband lose his memory.

Let us not let President Bush veto hope. Let us not let President Bush veto hope. We must not let President Bush veto hope.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY).

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Santorum-Bartlett pluripotent stem cell bill, and I want to take this opportunity to say on the floor of the House of Representatives that I am proudly both pro-life and pro-science.

Today is a great day for the American people. Today they get to see their Members of Congress stand up for the sanctity of human life as well as the hope of medical research. No longer as a society do our hands need to be tied to choose one or another; nor are we forced to trade one person's life for the chance to improve another's. No. Today, Mr. Speaker, I am here to say that technology has advanced and research has shown that there are methods to obtain embryonic-like stem cells ethically. It is because of the potential of these advances that the Federal Government should invest their financial resources in the promise of pluripotent stem cell research.

My good friend from Delaware, Mr. CASTLE, said earlier, you know, why go through another step? We have already got this proven technique that the Castle-DeGette bill calls for of obtaining stem cells, embryonic stem cells, from human embryos by just simply putting them in a blender, churning them up and easily getting those embryonic stem cells out.

I am saying to you and my colleagues, that is too much collateral damage. The collateral damage is destruction of human life. This is a better way. We can utilize embryonic stem cells from what Mr. BARTLETT has described in his bill and Senator SANTORUM, and I think that is the way to go. I commend him for this bill, and I commend it to my colleagues.

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

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1¾ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues and fellow citizens across the country, my family, too, has been touched by the scourge of disease. I have seen firsthand the devastating effect that disease can have on a loved one and on a family. That is why I am a strong supporter of stem cell research, research on adult stem cells and stem cells derived from umbilical cord and placenta blood.

Adult stem cell research has already proven successful and worthy of our investment of taxpayer money. It has proven so useful in fact that therapies derived from adult stem cells are treating patients today throughout the country.

Before the House today we have a bill that supports new and even broader horizons in stem cell technology, H.R. 5526, the Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act.

To be sure, positions on embryonic stem cell research are deeply held by every Member. This legislation focuses on what scientists at many of our country's most esteemed research universities have developed, embryonic stem cells that do not require the destruction of the embryo. Scientists seeking the same compassionate cures to many of our most debilitating diseases have recognized that science and ethics need not be divorced to produce positive results for patients.

Adult stem cell therapies and pluripotent stem cell therapy present exciting and hopeful new possibilities and treatments and even cures to families with loved ones facing the scourge of disease. This is good news worth repeating. We can do worthwhile and groundbreaking stem cell research to benefit patients without destroying human life.

Mr. Speaker, science and technology must always serve humanity, not the other way around. H.R. 5526 is faithful to that principle. We can both conform to the highest bioethical standards and provide the potential for hopeful medical advances. I urge its passage.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of our Nation's scientists and medical research. Today the Senate passed three bills. Now, I believe that it is important to pursue all types of research, and the bill that we are debating presently is something that NIH and our researchers can already do.

But let me be very clear: only H.R. 810, which this Chamber passed over a year ago, H.R. 810 is the only bill that holds the tremendous potential to cure some of life's most challenging conditions and diseases.

Mr. Speaker, we stand at the threshold of a new generation in medical research. I believe firmly that H.R. 810 and stem cell research will fundamentally change the course of medicine within the next decade and well into the future in so many ways.

We are limited only by the bounds of our own imagination. As long as our Nation's scientists and medical researchers have the tools and resources that they need, I believe that there is no limit to what they can cure. H.R. 810 and stem cell research offers the hope to cure Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, juvenile diabetes, and even spinal cord injuries.

Mr. Speaker, I remember a time more than 25 years ago when I stood in the locker room of the police station as a young police cadet. A police officer's gun accidentally went off. That bullet went through my neck and severed my spinal cord. I have been paralyzed ever since. I was told that I would never walk again.

But, Mr. Speaker, today is an exciting time in medical research. I firmly believe in a day in the very near future when a child with juvenile diabetes will not have to endure a lifetime of painful shots and tests; that families will not have to watch in agony as a loved one with Alzheimer's gradually declines; and, Mr. Speaker, I believe in a day when I will walk again.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have the opportunity to move research forward. H.R. 810 removes the restrictions that have been placed on it and offers hope to millions of Americans and people around the world.

This is an important time. I ask the President not to veto this bill, but to join with us in passing H.R. 810 and changing the world for the better.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of S. 2754.

Make no mistake about it, Congress is not debating banning stem cell research. It is legal. It is a question, though, of whether or not we will use the public's money to fund research that many Americans find morally and ethically reprehensible.

I support this bill because, without destroying innocent human life, it prioritizes additional research with the greatest potential for near-term clinical benefit, like umbilical cord blood and adult stem cells. That research is already yielding treatment to fight diseases like leukemia and lymphoma.

Mr. Speaker, our sacred Declaration of Independence states that every American has the right to life, and I am personally opposed to any measure that would create life just to destroy it.

This it is not the first nor the last time that I believe Congress will debate this important question, but

whenever doubt or conflict arises, I hope that Congress will always, always, Mr. Speaker, err on the side of life.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN).

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation does not advance potentially lifesaving stem cell research. Despite its nice sounding, albeit hard to pronounce, name, the bill simply tells the National Institutes of Health to continue doing what they are already doing. This bill really is here to serve as political cover so that opponents of H.R. 810, the Castle-DeGette bill, can claim that they did something. It is really both useless and superfluous.

Instead of spending our time debating bills that would not advance the science of stem cell research, we should be looking for real ways to promote this vital research. We should be empowering our scientists by opening up new resources and new opportunities for them to expand their research. We should be providing patients and families with real hope for the future, not passing empty bills.

Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to represent the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where Dr. Jamie Thomson and his team were the first to derive and culture human embryonic stem cells in a laboratory. Embryonic stem cells open the possibility of dramatic new medical treatments, transplantation therapies and cures. But at 9 p.m. on August 9, 2001, the hope and promise of this embryonic stem cell research was greatly curtailed by the administration's restrictions on Federal research dollars for stem cells.

We need to end these irrational restrictions. We need to enact H.R. 810 into law. H.R. 810 is real progress, and it provides our scientists with the tools that they need to continue their lifesaving research.

Please vote against the distraction before us right now.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT).

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to give this audience here three reasons to support this bill: first, it funds groundbreaking stem cell research. The types of stem cells promoted by S. 2754 possess similar potential to differentiate into any cell in the human body as embryonic stem cells. This bill authorizes funding for pluripotent stem cell techniques that do not involve the derivation from a human embryo.

Two, it is noncontroversial. It does not authorize Federal funding for research that would create, discard, destroy, knowingly harm human embryos or fetuses, avoiding this sensitive and controversial issue. Pluripotent stem cells derived from methods that do not result in the destruction of human embryos possess the ability to differentiate into all human cells, just like embryonic stem cells. This bill does not mandate any techniques or methods for deriving or creating alternative pluripotent stem cells. It simply establishes the guidelines for the type of research authorized for funding.

Finally, it supports scientific research. Researchers exploring alternative methods of deriving stem cells will benefit from Federal funding.

Mr. Speaker, no one in this room is untouched by the need to have good quality research. In my own family, my cousin has Lou Gehrig's disease. We need responsible research. This is responsible research.

Background: Scientists believe that stem cell therapies may be used to treat a wide variety of illnesses, from degenerative neurological diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Lou Gehrig's, to other conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

Pluripotent stem cells, of which embryonic stem cells are one type, can produce all of the cell types of the developing body. However, they need not be derived from human embryos.

A May 2005 White Paper published by the President's Council on Bioethics described, in depth, various methods of deriving pluripotent stem cells without destroying embryos.

In keeping with the recommendations of the President's 2001 policy on Federal stem cell research and the Dickey amendment, S. 2754 would authorize appropriations for the Secretary of HHS to conduct research into developing techniques "for the isolation, derivation, production, or testing" of pluripotent stem cells that do not involve the destruction of human embryos.

Bottom Line: S. 2754 will allow federal funding for stem cell research that is ethically sound because embryos will neither be created, harmed, nor destroyed.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SCHWARZ).

Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, this bill, while well-intentioned, raises obfuscation and disingenuousness to an art form. It says nothing that truly supports embryonic stem cell research. It promotes technology which does not exist in a form which will help cure human disease.

Only the central cell mass of the blastocyst, in this case those which would be used in in vitro fertilization but instead will be tossed in the trash, are pluripotent.

□ 1800

While I strongly support adult and umbilical cord stem cell research, and there are clinical uses for both now, and they should be supported and research continued.

The true stem cell bill is H.R. 810, the Castle-DeGette bill. It is the bill endorsed by the legitimate scientific community, and the bill which holds the most promise for cures for diseases which today have no cure. It is the bill which is truly pro-life.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I think it is unfortunate that Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. BALDWIN and others have attacked our motives on this floor. I think it degrades the debate. This is not about political cover, but how we can support stem cell research that is ethical and works, and promote research on pluripotent cells that do not destroy human embryos.

Let me remind my colleagues that way back on September 11, 2001, DAVE WELDON and a group of us began working on the umbilical cord blood bill that was finally, several years later, signed into law by the President. That legislation, signed on December 20, 2005 provides $265 million over 5 years to create a new, aggressive, robust, cord blood and bone marrow transplantation program.

That is not cover. That is all about trying to find cures. We take a back seat to no one. We have all had sicknesses in our families, every one of us. We just believe that we need to promote research that is both ethical and not embryo destroying.

Let me also remind my colleagues, and this may come as a pleasant surprise, this year we will spend $609 million on stem cell research. Is that cover too? Of course not. We want to find cures. And we want to do it in an efficacious manner as well as an ethical manner. I support ROSCOE BARTLETT's legislation which he has brought to the floor today.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STERNS).

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I come down in this short amount of time, Mr. Speaker, to say the claim and the facts. The claim that these folks make is the bill takes focus away from advancing cures through federally funded embryonic stem cell research from excess IVF embryos. Fact. In other words, it is another way to advance those cures which all supporters of embryonic stem cell research claim to support as well until now.

This is a very strange argument, when all supporters of this research and the Senate just voted to support this bill.

Claim. Alternative methods described in legislation are highly speculative, and are either simply ideas or unproven in a human model. We all know that the Federal money is going to cost the taxpayers a lot. But privately, you can go out and do what you folks want to do. So if there are so many cures for this, why not have the

private sector provide them for you? And all of these baby boomers that you talk about who will not get these, of course, will in fact get them, because the private sector can solve it.

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of our time.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Florida says this is a strange argument, and he has got that right, because this is a very strange bill. What it does is it says the Secretary shall conduct research into these so-called alternatives. But these are alternatives not specified in the legislation. But what is worse is it will take resources away from the already minuscule amount of resources that are being put in at the NIH to enforce the little stem cell research that is going on in this country.

Frankly, some of the kind of research techniques that have been discussed on the floor today, including those by my friend Mr. BARTLETT from Maryland, are techniques for alternative derivation of cells and so on that would, in fact, involve destruction of embryos.

And Dr. Leon Cass, who is the President's own chairman of his bioethics committee, said that it remains to be seen, in his view, whether any of those proposals for alternate sources of stem cells will succeed, and more discussion is surely required of some of the ethical issues.

So even their own expert thinks this bill may be unethical. Why would we do this when we have so many scientific advances that are just outside of our grasp? Why would we do this when there are thousands of embryos that are thrown away as medical waste? It would be as if your child was in a car crash, and you decided that the ethical thing to do would be to donate that child's organs so that someone else could live.

Why should we not allow people who have these embryos created for in vitro fertilization to donate those embryos which are slated to be thrown away as medical waste, in order that others may live?

We have heard the President intends to veto H.R. 810 and sign this bill. No one will be fooled by this fig leaf. The patients of America, the tens of millions of people who suffer from diseases like Parkinson's, diabetes, paralysis, cancer, heart disease, they know, they know that this research holds hope and they know that 72 percent of Americans support this.

And I would urge the President to think hard about whether this is where he wants to take the stand for his first veto. I would urge this House to think very, very hard about what they will do in that tragic incidence.

Mr. CASTLE and I asked the President to meet with us, so that we could look him in the eye and explain the bill, and explain the ethical controls that are in the bill, and explain how we too want ethical science but that we want science that is meaningful. He refused to meet with us. I have time tonight. If the President would like to meet with me and Mr. CASTLE, we would be delighted to explain the tremendous potential of embryonic stem cell research.

Mr. DEAL of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, to conclude the debate, I would yield the remaining time to Dr. WELDON from Florida.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. I thank Chairman DEAL for yielding.

I want to commend Dr. ROSCOE BARTLETT. Many of you don't know him as a doctor, but he is a doctor of physiology. He led the charge on this issue beginning over a year ago now. Frankly, I am really surprised anybody would get up and oppose this legislation. It has been claimed that the Congress never directs research like this. We have had a line item directing NIH on diabetes for years. As a matter of fact, I think it passed as a separate authorization through the Commerce Committee.

Then we have obviously had the directed research on AIDS for years and years and years. So there is plenty of precedent for this. As was stated earlier, this passed the Senate unanimously. You know, the embryonic stem cells that the opponents of this bill prefer to use, the embryonic stem cells from the fertility clinics, if they were ever used in a human clinical trial, first of all, you have to get over the issue that I have been saying for years and years, that they become tumors when you put them in animals, they become teratomas.

That is a feature of embryonic stem cells that nobody has published a study showing the ability to turn that feature off. So they have never been shown to be safe. But then you are going to have the genetic mismatch issue.

And, you know, Senator SPECTER recently held a hearing. And he asked Dr. Beatty, he runs the stem cell program at the NIH, and he asked him this question. He said, would you say, then, that embryonic stem cells are the best available, although all others ought to be pursued? I think he was expecting this researcher to say, yes, like so many other scientists are saying. The embryonic stem cells have the most promise.

But, no, he did not say that. He said nuclear reprogramming, where you take a mature adult cell type, and you effectively dedifferentiate it back to a pluripotent state, that is one of the most exciting areas of research. And that is what this bill calls for putting more money into.

Let me see, I think I had one other quote here. This is really interesting. Like I have said before, I am a doctor, I have treated Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, it has affected my family. I have also said I read the medical journals, indeed I even hired a Ph.D. researcher out of MIT to help me keep track of all of this.

And here it is. This is Nature Magazine, published on line: ''Reprogramming Adult Human Cells to Repair Damaged Tissue May Not be Quite as Tough as Thought.''

Researchers have devised a chemical cocktail that makes adult mouse cells behave like embryonic stem cells, and the recipe is surprisingly simple.

What is really exciting are a bunch of German researchers have published this. They have taken testicular cells in a mouse model, gotten them to behave just like embryonic stem cells, and indeed, if you do not think this is worth pursuing and you do not want to vote for this, I can tell you there are venture capitalists funding a company in California devoted to doing just this very thing. And that is where this is going.

The embryonic stem cells are going to go away, no matter how we vote on this. Now, I personally believe this is a very, very good piece of legislation nonetheless, and that is because you are going to learn a lot about cell biology and embryology by studying these things. I am morally and ethically against it, but what I have opposed are these false claims that you are going to have all of these cures.

I mean, there is no evidence to that. Now, I have never disputed the fact that you will gain knowledge by doing embryonic stem cell research. And we now have the potential to do that in a very ethically acceptable way to, I think, everybody. And this is a very, very modest piece of legislation.

To oppose it, I don't know how else to interpret it other than to say, you really want to kill embryos. Because we now have abundant scientific evidence coming forward that you can create embryonic stem cells using other methods. And there are several different pathways to do that. And this bill is a very, very good bill.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I resent being dragged into RICK SANTORUM's hapless re-election campaign by having to vote on bills designed to provide him and other extremist Republicans with cover for their opposition to productive embryonic stem cell research.

S. 2754, the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act, directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to pour money into far less promising methods of deriving stem cells from adult cells. S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act, bans unethical forms of research that are already prohibited by law. I sincerely doubt that these worthless bills will convince any voter that their Senator supports stem cell research.

I will vote for the Fetus Farming bill simply because this practice is already against the law. Therefore, this bill is meaningless, but also harmless.

However, I will vote against the Alternative Pluripotent bill because it sets a dangerous precedent in choosing one form of research over the other. Much as Congress would never instruct the NIH to cure cancer, but only in a certain manner, we shouldn't dictate the kind of stem cell research scientists should and should not practice. This bill requires the Secretary of HHS to conduct research into so-

called alternative therapies. But these therapies do not currently exist and their development would shift scarce research dollars away from embryonic research.

If Senator SANTORUM and President Bush truly believe that it's morally superior to discard single cells in a freezer rather than to use them to help millions of Americans with Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and diabetes, then they should have the guts to say so without another sham bill for political cover.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support S. 2754, the Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act. I am under no illusion that this bill will contribute significantly to the advancement of stem cell research.

As a Member of the Science committee, I am committed to the advancement of science. I believe we should explore creative initiatives and pursue sound research. By demonizing science, we only hurt ourselves and make it more likely that our country will fall behind other countries in the critically important fields of science, technology, and innovation.

The type of stem cells that this bill refers to are the most adaptable and unique of all of the stem cell varieties. As opposed to adult stem cells, which are limited to a genre, such as blood cells or bone cells, pluripotent stem cells can be eventually developed into any bodily tissue. But they cannot themselves develop into a human being. The possibilities, and medical miracles, are literally limitless, and only restricted by time and by funding.

The pluripotent stem cells were derived using non-Federal funds from early-stage embryos donated voluntarily by couples undergoing fertility treatment in an in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinic or from non-living fetuses obtained from terminated first trimester pregnancies. Informed consent was obtained from the donors in both cases. Women voluntarily donating fetal tissue for research did so only after making the decision to terminate the pregnancy.

Those who would argue against pluripotent stem cells usually approach the topic through one of the following three questions:

1. Do the pluripotent cells have a moral status on their own? In other words, are they considered entities that must be protected?

2. Is it unethical to derive pluripotent cells from fetal tissue?

3. Is it unethical to create human embryonic blastocysts in order to create these pluripotent cells?

Unfortunately, however, this simple little bill and its companion, which we are also discussing today, do not weigh the consequences of any of these valid policy discussions. Instead, it does little to advance the very serious and promising area of scientific research that is reflected in H.R. 810; this research is supported by a majority of this House, and hopefully will be reaffirmed by this House later this week.

This bill only encourages research that does not discard, destroy, or knowingly harm a human fetus, which is consistent with current scientific research practices anyway. By designating this moral boundary, this bill requires researchers to find a way to make stem cells reap the potential benefits while skirting a politically divisive issue.

I am not opposed to this bill, although it does not further scientific research. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote in favor of science, scientific research, and the promise of scientific advancement later this week.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REHBERG). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2754.

The question was taken.

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

Ms. DEGETTE. 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 question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

S. 3504, by the yeas and nays.

S. 2754, by the yeas and nays.

H. Res. 498, by the yeas and nays.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

FETUS FARMING PROHIBITION ACT OF 2006

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 3504.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 3504, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 425, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 379]

YEAS—425

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
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
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kelly
Kennedy (MN)
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
Lee
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
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
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
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
Schmidt
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
Tiahrt
Tiberi
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
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Carter
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Evans
Kennedy (RI)
McKinney
Northup
Rothman

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1835

Mr. TERRY changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I was off the Capitol Hill complex when votes were called and was stuck in traffic, which caused me to miss the first vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

ALTERNATIVE PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL THERAPIES ENHANCEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and passing the Senate bill, S. 2754.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 2754, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 273, nays 154, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 380]

YEAS—273

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Chabot
Chocola
Clyburn
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Delahunt
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Etheridge
Everett
Fattah
Feeney
Ferguson
Fitzpatrick (PA)
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gibbons
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green (WI)
Gutknecht
Hall
Harris
Hart
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Istook
Jenkins
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy (MN)
Kildee
Kind
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Langevin
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Lipinski
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
Marshall
Matheson
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McKeon
McMorris
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Ney
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Oxley
Pascrell
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Royce
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Ryun (KS)
Saxton
Schmidt
Schwartz (PA)
Scott (GA)
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Sherwood
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Skelton
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Snyder
Sodrel
Souder
Stearns
Strickland
Stupak
Sullivan
Sweeney
Tancredo
Tanner
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walden (OR)
Walsh
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—154

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boehlert
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Case
Castle
Chandler
Clay
Cleaver
Coble
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Farr
Filner
Flake
Frank (MA)
Gilchrest
Gonzalez
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Higgins
Hinchey
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kelly
Kennedy (RI)
Kilpatrick (MI)
Kucinich
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Leach
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Linder
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Maloney
Markey
Matsui
McCarthy
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Olver
Owens
Pallone
Pastor
Paul
Payne
Pelosi
Price (NC)
Rangel
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Sabo
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sanders
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwarz (MI)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Shays
Sherman
Simmons
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Solis
Spratt
Stark
Tauscher
Thomas
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Wexler
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn

NOT VOTING—6

Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Evans
McKinney
Northup
Rothman

□ 1844

So (two-thirds of those voting having not responded in the affirmative) the motion was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

REMEMBERING HELEN SEWELL

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

Mr. HASTERT. Ladies and gentlemen, for us on the Republican side of the aisle, it is a sad day today. We have lost Helen Sewell. Helen served in the Republican cloakroom for over 70 years. She was a person who was always happy, always met any special needs that people had.

She starting serving in the House in the cloakroom with her father. She started working when she was in junior high. She was a very sweet lady. She was there all the time. Whether it was late at night, early in the morning, Helen was there with her hot dogs and tuna fish sandwich, and always a little hot sauce or relish if people wanted that. She loved working in the cloakroom and working for the people and serving the people that came to see her almost on a daily basis.

When people like Gerald Ford or George Bush, Sr., or DICK CHENEY would come by, they would always make sure that they took some time and conversed with her and greeted, kibitzed, a bit in the cloakroom.

Some of her favorite Members include Henry Cabot Lodge and Claire Booth Luce, so Members know she went back a long, long time in this country's history.

We will miss her. We thank the Lord for her service here, and I would just like to take a minute in remembrance.

Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, 5-minute voting will continue.

There was no objection.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The pending business is the question of suspending the rules and agreeing to the resolution, H. Res. 498.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MARCHANT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 498, on which the yeas and nays are ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 424, nays 0, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 381]

YEAS—424

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Allen
Andrews
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Bass
Bean
Beauprez
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boustany
Boyd
Bradley (NH)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Brown (OH)
Brown (SC)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Butterfield
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardin
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Carter
Case
Castle
Chabot
Chandler
Chocola
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Cramer
Crenshaw
Crowley
Cubin
Cuellar
Culberson
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (KY)
Davis (TN)
Davis, Jo Ann
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Doolittle
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Farr
Fattah
Feeney
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
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall
Harman
Harris
Hart
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Hayworth
Hefley
Hensarling
Herger
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hostettler
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hyde
Inglis (SC)
Inslee
Israel
Issa
Istook
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Jenkins
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
Lee
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
McMorris
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy
Murtha
Musgrave
Myrick
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Ney
Norwood
Nunes
Nussle
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Osborne
Otter
Owens
Oxley
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Paul
Pearce
Pelosi
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
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
Schmidt
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
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
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
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Evans
McKinney
Northup
Payne
Rothman
Thomas

□ 1859

So (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING PRINTING OF REVISED EDITION OF POCKET VERSION OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration be discharged from further consideration of the Senate concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 108) authorizing the printing of a revised edition of a pocket version of the United States Constitution, and other publications, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate concurrent resolution.

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

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to object. I shall not object, but I will yield to the gentleman from Michigan to further explain his request.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 108, authorizing the printing of a revised edition of a pocket version of the United States Constitution and other publications. This concurrent resolution not only reauthorizes the printing of the pocket size Constitution, but also the publication ''Our Flag.'' These congressional publications are favorites among Members to distribute to their constituents who visit them both here and in the Nation's Capitol and back at home in their district.

And I can say that not only do Members enjoy distributing them, because we have such a respect and love for the Constitution, but I do have to tell you that students, citizens, teachers, also love to receive these pocket editions. And I urge them to emphasize to them what a fantastic thing it is that a pocket-sized version of a document has served this Nation so well for so many years that it has led to the longest lasting democratic government in the history of this planet.

In addition, this resolution authorizes for the first time the printing of a history of the U.S. Botanic Garden. This book offers a comprehensive history of the garden and will further help its mission of educating the American public on environmental sciences.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I ask for support of this resolution.

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, further reserving my right to

object, I would like to now join the chairman and urge the House to adopt this printing resolution. The two publications to be reprinted, ''Our Flag'' and the pocket edition of the U.S. Constitution, are very popular with the American people, especially teachers and students.

I know when I go to my schools, our students really enjoy these two very fine publications telling them about their flag and about the Constitution in an abbreviated form.

So the supplies, Mr. Speaker, of both have been exhausted, and with Constitution Day approaching on September 17, now is an ideal time to replenish our supplies.

The resolution also provides for printing of a new publication about the U.S. Botanic Gardens.

Mr. Speaker, I remove my reservation, and I urge all Members to support the resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate concurrent resolution, as follows:

S. CON. RES. 108

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. POCKET VERSION OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The 22nd edition of the pocket version of the United States Constitution shall be printed as a Senate document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

(b) ADDITIONAL COPIES.—In addition to the usual number, there shall be printed the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies of the document, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies of the document as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of $198,000 with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 for each Member of Congress.

SEC. 2. OUR FLAG.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The 2006 revised edition of the publication entitled ''Our Flag'' shall be printed as a Senate document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing.

(b) ADDITIONAL COPIES.—In addition to the usual number, there shall be printed the lesser of—

(1) 550,000 copies of the document, of which 440,000 copies shall be for the use of the House of Representatives, 100,000 copies shall be for the use of the Senate, and 10,000 copies shall be for the use of the Joint Committee on Printing; or

(2) such number of copies of the document as does not exceed a total production and printing cost of $215,000 with distribution to be allocated in the same proportion as described in paragraph (1), except that in no case shall the number of copies be less than 1 for each Member of Congress.

SEC. 3. A BOTANIC GARDEN FOR THE NATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There shall be printed as a Senate document under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing the book entitled ''A Botanic Garden for the Nation'', prepared by the United States Botanic Gardens.

(b) SPECIFICATIONS.—The Senate document described in subsection (a) shall include illustrations and shall be in the style, form, manner, and binding as directed by the Joint Committee on Printing.

(c) NUMBER OF COPIES.—In addition to the usual number of copies, there shall be printed with suitable binding the lesser of—

(1) 3,075 copies of the document, of which 725 copies shall be for the use of the Senate and 1,470 for the use the House of Representatives with distribution determined by the Joint Committee on Printing, 880 copies for the use of the Botanic Gardens with distribution determined by the Joint Committee of Congress on the Library; or

(2) a number of copies that does not have a total production and printing cost of more than $102,000.

The Senate concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the conflict between Hezbollah, the infamous Lebanese-based terrorist group, and Israel is nothing new.

But over the weekend Hezbollah has upped the ante. They have kidnapped Israeli soldiers and launched countless rocket attacks against Israeli civilians.

With the support of Iran and Syria, Hezbollah is heavily armed and ready for an all-out war.

Obviously, this issue is not new. In 1990 the peace treaty that ended the hostilities in Lebanon called on the Lebanese Government to deploy its army along the border with Israel. This has not been done.

In 2004, the United Nations called on Lebanon to disarm Hezbollah. Once again, this has not been done.

With this in mind, Israel not only has the right to defend itself against terrorist acts; it has the responsibility to do so. Allowing Hezbollah to terrorize Israel without fear of reprisal would be tantamount to appeasement.

Throughout history, this strategy has repeatedly proven itself a failure.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF ARKANSAS LT. GOVERNOR WIN ROCKEFELLER

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues from Arkansas today. The State of Arkansas has lost one of its greatest citizens and role models this week. Lieutenant Governor Win Rockefeller dedicated his life to public service and to the people of our State.

As Lieutenant Governor, Governor Rockefeller focused on economic development, education and literacy. Let me give you just an example of the many great contributions that Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller made, not just as an elected official, but as a citizen. The Lieutenant Governor created a program called ''Books in the Attic'' where Boy Scouts collected used children's books to distribute to needy families. This was a little thing, but Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller was always willing to use his resources to do good, but more importantly he wanted to get other people involved in doing good as well.

The passing of Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller is a great loss for the State of Arkansas. We will all be grateful that he chose to make Arkansas his home. Our hearts and prayers go out to his family and friends who loved him so much.

HONORING WIN ROCKEFELLER

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

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues from the Arkansas congressional delegation to recognize a man whose generosity and dedication transformed so many communities across our State. I have met few men with such an enthusiasm for service and will miss his leadership greatly.

Win Paul Rockefeller displayed one of his favorite quotes on a plaque outside his home. The quote comes from Micah 6:8 and says: ''And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?'' I can think of no better way to honor a man with so many accomplishments and a great appreciation for the people of Arkansas. He was indeed a good man.

HONORING WIN ROCKEFELLER

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, until the day he died last Sunday, Lieutenant Governor Win Rockefeller cared deeply about his family, did all he could for Arkansas, and loved America.

My wife was formerly his associate pastor for 7 years at Pulaski Heights Methodist Church, and she shared with me today a couple of her favorite stories about Win. She said that here he was, one of America's richest men. When he was with the youth program as a father, as a member of the church, rather than fly up to Colorado and meet the youth group, he climbed on the bus as a chaperone and took the 16-hour ride with all the kids and teenagers up to Colorado on the ski trip.

She also related to me when she left at the end of her 7 years at Pulaski Heights Methodist Church and was

going through a lot of changes in her life, that the church had two different receptions which he attended to show his support and affection and concern for her.

Lieutenant Governor Rockefeller was a genuine, caring man. Our thoughts are with his wonderful children and family.

WINTHROP PAUL ROCKEFELLER

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleagues from Arkansas, all four of us, rise this evening to remember the life of our Lieutenant Governor, Winthrop Paul Rockefeller. This is a sad day for Arkansas and for Arkansans.

As a State Senator in the Arkansas legislature, I had the privilege to serve with Lieutenant Governor Win Rockefeller for nearly 5 years. In presiding over the State senate, I can remember that he was always fair and ruled without political bias.

I had the distinct pleasure to know him personally as a result of our work together in the State senate. And I can tell you he was a generous man. He was an unassuming man. He was a family man. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that he loved the State of Arkansas and its people.

The people of Arkansas will deeply miss his leadership and his vision, his vision to make our State a better place for all of us.

His family is in my prayers during this difficult time.

THE DIFFICULT, UNENVIABLE PLIGHT OF ISRAEL

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine having thousands of enemy rockets rain down on American soil, on American cities? How threatened would we feel?

This is exactly what Israel is facing today again. The recent, unprovoked attacks on Israel are deplorable. They are made all the more concerning because of the commendable unilateral Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000, which vividly demonstrated their desire for peace.

With United Nations Resolution 1559, Lebanon was charged with controlling their southern territory and disarming Hezbollah. The world should seize the opportunity now to assist and finally accomplish 1559.

America must strongly support Israel's right of self-defense while, at the same time, working to strengthen the democratically elected government in Lebanon.

I am encouraged by the unanimity of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan in condemning the action of Iran and the actions of Hezbollah.

The war on terror is truly a global war, and the civilized world must condemn these attacks and strive to work together to end the scourge of terrorist violence.

BRING AMERICANS HOME FROM LEBANON

(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, it spells relief that the 10 students from the Mickey Leland Kibbutz program have now begun to leave Israel and to come home. They had a wonderful experience, but they were in the midst of one the rising conflicts in a region that needs the full attention of this administration.

My first request is for Americans to have the confidence in America, and for America to extend itself on behalf of those who need to be rescued from Lebanon. How can we watch European countries send ship after ship, and we are begging at the shores to be allowed to leave Lebanon?

What more pain can Americans experience? And who can expect an American to have confidence in their government when you are asking them to sign a piece of paper to pay to save their lives? Did they do that when they were fleeing from Vietnam when North Vietnam was taking over South Vietnam?

It is time to bring resolution. And the President was right: let's talk to Syria. Let's have Hezbollah stand down. Let's have a cease-fire. Let's have the soldiers of Israel return.

And, yes, they have a right to defend. But we, as a world power, have a right and responsibility to engage and bring about a resolution in the conflict in the Mid East.

REMEMBERING HELEN SEWELL

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker of the House came down to the floor just a few minutes ago and talked about Helen, who worked in the Cloakroom for probably 40 or 50 years and told about what a wonderful lady she was. I don't want to be redundant, but I want to say that there are an awful lot of people that serve in this body that the people of America never see that make it so worthwhile and so important to be here. Helen was one of those people. She was so nice to every Member of Congress. She treated us all like family.

She served with many Presidents, from Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy. All of those guys, regardless of party, liked Helen. They all had pictures with her, and she kept them back there in the Cloakroom and was very proud of each and every picture she had with Presidents. And they all admired her. As the Speaker said, they all came to visit her when they came to the Capitol.

Let me just say that Helen was one of the most wonderful people that I ever met, and I haven't had many occasions since I have been here to feel a little weak in the knees when something happens; but when I heard that Helen died today, I felt a little pain in the knees because she was such a wonderful person.

So to Helen's family, if they happen to be paying attention to this, Mr. Speaker, we send our deepest sympathy because she was one of the finest people that I ever met, and she is surely going to be missed by everybody in the House.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO LIBERIA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 109–125)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons and prohibiting the importation of certain goods from Liberia are to continue in effect beyond July 22, 2006. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on July 21, 2005 (70 FR 41935).

The actions and policies of former Liberian President Charles Taylor and his close associates, in particular their unlawful depletion of Liberian resources and their removal from Liberia and secreting of Liberian funds and property, continue to undermine Liberia's transition to democracy and the orderly development of its political, administrative, and economic institutions and resources. These actions and policies pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency and related measures blocking the property of certain persons and

prohibiting the importation of certain goods from Liberia.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, *July 18, 2006*.

□ 1915

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.

GUN AMENDMENTS TO SCIENCE, COMMERCE, JUSTICE, STATE APPROPRIATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, this body's war on common sense continues.

Before the Independence Day recess, the House approved two amendments to the Science, Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations bill that promote irresponsible gun ownership and discourage police departments from working together to solve gun crimes. Last year the House passed legislation that would make sure that gun locks are included with all handgun sales. Last month the House stripped away that provision.

Gun safety locks can save lives. I agree with the proponents of these measures that most gun owners are responsible and store their guns safely and securely. I am not worried about these gun owners. Many responsible gun owners already voluntarily equip their guns with safety locks. Gun locks are needed to prevent accidents with the minority of gun owners who are not responsible. And while the pro-gun lobby does not like to talk about it, yes, there are irresponsible gun owners out there.

Last month in New Jersey an 11-year-old found his grandfather's gun and killed his 12-year-old best friend. A gun lock that you can purchase online for less than $7 would have prevented this tragedy. According to the CDC, 151 children died of accidental shotgun wounds in 2003. Mandatory gun locks would have saved some of those children's lives.

Gun locks prevent stolen guns from being used in crimes. Opponents of mandatory gun locks cite that the cost of gun locks prevent gun ownership. That is truly nonsense. This is like saying the added cost of air bags and seat belts prevent people from buying cars. And, again, trigger locks are relatively inexpensive. Seven dollars could save a child's life. Mr. Speaker, is a $7 gunlock really infringing on second amendment rights? Of course not.

I wish I could say that the amendment stripping away the gunlock provision was the only nonsensical amendment to the Department of Justice appropriations bill, but it was not. Once again, this bill would have made felons out of law enforcement officials who share ATF gun tracing information with police departments in other jurisdictions.

The ATF's gun-tracing program helps local police solve gun crimes by analyzing the unique marks made on bullets and cartridge cases when guns are fired. The images of these markings can be compared with other images in more than 200 Federal, State, and local law enforcement laboratories. But this appropriation bill would have made it a crime, a crime, for a police department to share information from the database with another department.

Say a police department in my district on Long Island obtains ballistic information from the ATF and a similar shooting occurs in New York City. The Long Island department could not share that information. In fact, an officer who did share this information would be arrested. This is absolutely insane.

Instead of cracking down on criminals using guns, this provision would treat police officers like criminals. To paraphrase my friend, Mayor Bloomberg of New York, it is a godawful bill.

Again, some Members of this body put their allegiance to the NRA above common sense. The tracing program provides law enforcement agencies with valuable information about gun trafficking that can prevent crimes from happening. Tracing helps the public identify gun dealers and traffickers who are supplying illegal guns in our communities. But this provision would prevent the use of trace data as evidence in any State or Federal court or any nonATF administrative procedure. This provision cuts local law enforcement out of the loop. Without this tracing data, local law enforcement officers will not be able to pursue gun suppliers that have been implicated in crimes without the ATF's getting involved first. And we all know the ATF does not have the resources to get involved in every civil issue regarding gun crimes.

We let our police departments go after taverns that serve underage drinkers, but Congress will not allow them to crack down on the 1 percent, 1 percent, of dealers in this country who sell guns involved in 57 percent of the crimes.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for common sense. I hope the other body and the eventual conferees who will determine the final version of this appropriation bill will exercise more common sense than the House did last month.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here 10 years. I have never put any legislation forward that would take away the right of someone to own a gun. I am here for gun safety issues. I am here to save lives. I am here to keep down medical costs. I am here to protect our communities. We can do better. And we can with commonsense laws.

JUSTICE FOR ASHTON GLOVER

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, ''humorous,'' ''outgoing,'' ''warm-hearted,'' ''devout.''

These are a few words to describe 16-year-old Ashton Glover, words that came instantly to those who knew her best and loved her.

Ashton had the world at her fingers. She was entering Clements High School for her final year and then wanted to attend Texas A&M University to become a veterinarian. She was born in Lufkin, Texas, and she was proud of her country roots, and she held on to them. She now lived in the small town of Sugar Land, Texas, outside of Houston.

She was a self-described tomboy. Ashton proudly held an officer position with the Future Farmers of America, and she preferred the outdoors and being among nature.

Ashton was a devout Christian. When not with the First Colony Church of Christ Youth Group, she was always willing to help those less fortunate or those in need. She was always there to provide advice to friends or give a simple hug to those in pain. She thought her mission on Earth was to help people.

A room instantly illuminated with Ashton's presence. Those who knew her stated they were the lucky ones. They were able to share in everything that Ashton was.

Those who knew her, however, did not know that two other students, with hearts full of malice and souls fatally bent on mischief, were plotting to steal the life of Ashton.

On July 7 Ashton met up with two 18-year-old students to go ''mudding.'' As you know, Mr. Speaker, that is something we do in the South, driving trucks through muddy fields. It was the type of activity that appealed to this fun-loving girl.

Little did Ashton know that these two scoundrels had no plans to go ''mudding'' with her. Their sinister intentions were not revealed until it was too late for her to escape. They took Ashton to a dark, deserted construction site, away from the security of Sugar Land, Texas. Away from those who loved her. Away from the safety of her home. And they executed her gangland style.

No reason. No argument. No justification. Just what one murderer called ''a morbid curiosity'' to see what would happen, to see what she looked like when we shot her in the back of the head.

These two teenage terrors, feeling no remorse or human compassion, left Ashton to die there in the heap of garbage while they went over to IHOP for breakfast.

Mr. Speaker, there is something evil and cold about people who kill someone and then go and have a hearty breakfast.

After they were through eating their pancakes, they came back and buried her in a shallow grave. They went home and slept off the night's atrocity, while her family had nightmares of where Ashton was.

When Ashton's body was located by police, the outlaws decided to run in the darkness of the night. They fled north to Canada, but they did not run fast enough or hard enough. They were caught at the U.S.-Canadian border after police typed their names into the national criminal database.

This tragic and unspeakable crime hits close to my heart. As a father of four and grandfather of five, no father wants to lose a child in the fullness of youth. As a former prosecutor and judge, I believe in justice. And there must be justice, Mr. Speaker.

Justice for a young girl who had a full and rewarding life ahead of her, who was murdered just so a couple of cowardly cunning criminals could see what it looked like to kill somebody, when a young girl took her last gasping breath. There must be justice for her family and her friends who must now endure life without her.

These two killers must also get some justice, Mr. Speaker. Justice is getting what one deserves. These teens will no doubt cry and whine for mercy, but justice must rule the day. Justice for these two demons who brutally executed a young Ashton and extinguished a bright light in this world.

Some individuals will now argue that these two 18-year-olds should be treated with compassion because of their age. Mr. Speaker, these two killers were macho enough to violently end the life of a young girl just to see the results. They should be macho enough to accept the punishment in the penitentiary, where they belong.

Victims should not be discriminated against based upon the age of the offender. As King Solomon was once quoted as saying, ''Justice will only be achieved when those who are not injured by crime feel as indignant as those who are.''

And, Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

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

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

MILITARY READINESS

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to contrast two statements for you to set the stage on what we are dealing with regarding the United States Army.

''Help is on the way.'' That is what President Bush said to our military during the 2000 campaign when they were in pretty good shape.

And ''No.'' That is what General Schoomaker, the chief of staff of the Army, answered when I asked him if he was comfortable with the readiness levels of the nondeployed Army units here in the United States.

Let me put it in very clear terms. Our Army is in a crisis. Our forces are fighting valiantly in Iraq and Afghanistan. But the strain of that continued effort has put our preparedness to deter or to fight somewhere else, if we must, at strategic risk. The crises in North Korea, Iran, the Middle East, show how quickly things can change and how they can go wrong. We must be prepared. And right now the Army is not.

President Bush, during the 2000 campaign, strongly criticized the Clinton administration because two divisions were below their appropriate readiness ratings. He said, ''If called upon by the Commander in Chief today, two entire divisions of the Army would have to report 'not ready for duty, sir.' ''

Today nearly every combat brigade located within the United States would report that they are not ready for duty. They are at the lowest levels of readiness.

Most nondeployed units in the active Army are reporting that they are not able to complete the expected wartime missions. The exact numbers, of course, are classified. Army readiness for units not in Iraq has steadily declined and has fallen to levels that will limit our ability to project ground forces.

Every nondeployed National Guard combat brigade in the Army is reported at the lowest level of readiness. Forty percent of the Army's ground equipment is deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. The army has depleted its prepositioned overseas war stocks of equipment. The Army is so strapped for equipment, they are planning on downloading prepositioned ships loaded with combat equipment to help fill shortages.

Mr. Speaker, the Army has lost over 1,000 wheeled vehicles, over 100 armored vehicles, and 100 helicopters since the start of the war in Iraq.

□ 1930

Guard units in the U.S. are suffering severe equipment shortages which will affect their ability to respond to emergencies in their home States, such as Katrina.

Equipment readiness is suffering as the priority for repair, parts and equipment is only toward the combat theater. The Army is now having a crisis funding its installations at home because of poor planning and the lack of support from the administration. The recent supplemental funding resolution increased the installation budgets by $722 million, but the Army is still short $530 million to meet minimum support levels through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Each installation is being forced to find ways to cut their operating budgets. These cuts are affecting vital training and family support, which further degrades the Army's readiness posture.

Over $290 billion has been spent in Iraq, with no end in sight. The Army requested more money in the recent supplemental, but the President's Office of Management and Budget cut $4.9 billion from the Army's request for the 2006 war supplemental before sending it over here to Congress.

During the 2000 election, the current administration told our military, help is on the way. That is clearly not the case. The administration has failed to request the funds needed for the defense of this Nation. We must give the Army what it needs. The Army will need sustained funds, $17.5 billion this year alone, to start getting well. We cannot shortchange them. We must provide a new direction for the Army, with sustained equipment and manpower, so that we can project power to protect America, wherever and whenever necessary. That is exactly what we must be prepared to do.

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

THE SCOURGE OF UNDERAGE DRINKING

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I request to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, underage drinking flies under the radar screen most of the time, and I guess the reason for that is that alcohol is legal and is widely accepted. The average age 12- to 17-year-olds begin drinking is 12.7 years of age.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated the number of underage deaths due to excessive alcohol use is roughly 4,554 a year. In other words, in one year we lose more young people to underage drinking than we have lost in Iraq in 3 years. The death rate is six times higher for underage drinking.

Another death rate that is six times higher is alcohol kills six times more young people than all other drugs combined: heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana. Six times more die from underage drinking.

Teens who start drinking before the age of 15 are four times more likely to

become addicted to alcohol than someone who starts drinking at age 21. Yet the Federal Government spends about 25 times more annually to combat youth drug use than to prevent underage alcohol use. In other words, we spend $1.8 billion on combating heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana, compared to $71 million for underage drinking.

Most people know that alcohol is a gateway drug. It leads to all of these other drugs directly, and it appears to be much more fatal and more dangerous when you look at the raw numbers.

Television ads for alcohol products outnumber responsibility messages by 32 to 1. In other words, you will see 32 ads promoting alcohol, and many of those ads are very attractive to young people, for every one that talks about responsible use of alcohol. From 2001 to 2003, the alcohol industry spent $2.5 billion on television advertising their product, and only $27 million on responsibility programs.

Underage drinkers currently account for 17 percent of all alcohol sales in the United States; and in my State, Nebraska, underage drinkers consume 25 percent of the alcohol sold.

Young people tend to binge drink. They do not drink socially. Ninety-two percent of the alcohol consumed by 12- to 14-year-olds is consumed when they are having five or more drinks in a row, which is called binge drinking, or, more often, drinking to get drunk.

Recent studies have found that heavy exposure of the adolescent brain to alcohol interferes with brain development. We will take a look at this poster. On the right is a young person 15 years of age who abstains from alcohol, who was asked to do a comprehensive memory test. On the left is a young person who is a binge drinker who is sober at the time and asked to do the same test. You see the amount of cortical activity, the amount of brain activity firing in the young person who is an abstainer compared to the one who uses and abuses alcohol.

So there is quite a difference in this regard, and I would present a hypothesis of mine and that is that a great many young people who drop out, a great number of young people who do very poorly in school are affected dramatically by alcohol, binge drinking, and alcohol abuse.

There are a couple of other things on this poster that I think are worthy of note. There are roughly 3 million teenagers who today are full-blown alcoholics. Alcohol, as we mentioned, kills about six times more people than all other drugs combined. The total cost of underage drinking to the country is $53 billion a year. $53 billion a year. It is a huge expenditure.

Mr. Speaker, we have introduced legislation, Congresswoman ROYBAL-ALLARD, Congressman WAMP, Congressman WOLF and Congresswoman DELAURO, and Senators DEWINE and DODD have introduced the Sober Truth on Prevention of Underage Drinking, the STOP Act, which would, number one, create a Federal agency coordinating all of the Federal programs aimed at underage drinking. Right now we have underage drinking programs spread across 12 agencies. They are not coordinated. Sometimes they duplicate each other and are not very effective. So we would want those coordinated.

Secondly, it authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults. The number one indicator of whether a young person will use alcohol and abuse alcohol is parental attitudes. So many parents really believe the myth if a young person is using alcohol, then they will not use marijuana, they will not use cocaine, they will not use heroin, when exactly the opposite is true. Because anymore, a person that abuses one substance will abuse another, and alcohol usually leads to further abuse.

The Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act, STOP Act, would:

Create a Federal Interagency Coordinating Committee to coordinate the efforts and expertise across agencies for underage drinking;

Authorizes a national media campaign directed at adults;

Parents are the number one influence on underage drinking;

Parents & friends purchase 65 percent.

Provide additional resources to communities and colleges and universities to prevent underage drinking;

1,700 college students die each year

70,000 rapes or sexual assaults

Increases Federal research and data collection on underage drinking.

So we hope that we can have support for this act. We think it is important, and we urge its passage.

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

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

PROBLEMS WITH HOUSE OFFSHORE DRILLING BILL

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the offshore oil drilling legislation that passed the House last month has a lot of problems. One of its biggest failings is that the bill overrides and ignores the long-standing, bipartisan objection to new drilling off the California coast.

The people of California have repeatedly made it clear that they oppose this wrong-headed approach. In fact, opposition to this legislation is unanimous in California that even in the middle of a highly charged race for Governor, the Democrats and Republicans are on the same page on this one issue. State Treasurer Phil Angelides, a Democrat, opposes the House bill, pointing out that it would remove the critical protections for California's coastline and also financially punish States that decide to protect their environment and coastal economies by continuing to oppose offshore oil drilling.

The Republican Governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, sent another letter to the Senate this week restating his opposition in no uncertain terms. In his newest letter, which I am submitting for the RECORD, he writes: ''Our coast is not for sale, and no amount of promises of money or other incentives will alter my position on that.''

Well, I am disappointed that so many Members of the House voted against California's interests last month. Our State's Senators have strong records of spelling for the people of California, so I am not concerned about them. But I do want to make sure that the Senators from around the country realize that any legislation that opens the California coast to drilling will be a non-starter in our State and should be rejected.

As the Governor wrote: ''Anything short of upholding the current moratorium in perpetuity would be unacceptable to Californians.'' Governor Schwarzenegger also wrote something very interesting: ''California has the most aggressive energy efficiency measures in the Nation. Because of our efforts, California's per capita energy use has remained nearly flat, while the nationwide energy use has increased by nearly 50 percent.''

What the Governor is telling the people of this Nation is that had you made the same choices that we made starting back in 1974 with the first fuel crisis, you would have been able to save a huge amount of energy in this country. While California has continued to grow, our per capita use has remained flat, and that is 50 percent better than the rest of the Nation. That means that not only do California consumers save a great deal of energy and they reduce the pollution to the atmosphere; they also save a great deal of money.

As the other body considers the legislation that was passed out of this House this last week, I hope they will remember that energy conservation and innovative alternative approaches will guarantee us far more energy independence in the future than the shortsighted House bill that will require the ruining of the coastlines of this great Nation.

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

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

LEAVE ISSUE OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGE TO THE STATES

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Connecticut is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, today we debated a constitutional amendment drafted not to protect my marriage or my family, I see no reasonable way to argue it would, but rather to explicitly deny a portion of our society the right to marry and the benefits that accompany that kind of partnership.

I do not advocate the legalization of gay marriage, but our Constitution is simply not the proper place to set this kind of social policy. I believed back in 1996 when I voted for the Defense of Marriage Act and I still believe today the decision about whether to recognize gay marriage should be left to the States.

I can't help but wonder why we are doing this. What are we so afraid of? Gay men and women pass through our lives every day. They are wonderful teachers and leaders and role models who happen to be gay, and sometimes we don't even know they are gay. There are brave men and women buried in Arlington National Cemetery who happen to be gay.

I wouldn't be a Member of Congress today if it weren't for an extraordinary teacher I had in high school 40 years ago. I learned years later he was gay and that he had to commute from Connecticut to Washington, D.C. to be with his partner every weekend, in part to protect his privacy and his job.

When I went to college, my understanding of gay people was impacted again by my wife's best friend. One day she told us that she, too, like my wife and I, had found the love of her life. We were eager to meet the boyfriend she was so madly in love with. But we soon learned her love was not a he, but a she. Once we got over our surprise and our ways of thinking about relationships, we were able to sincerely rejoice in the joy they brought each other because we knew what a dear and good person our friend is.

My perception of gay people evolved further during my first campaign for Congress when I worked with a magnificent young man named Carl Brown. He became my friend, and he gave me another gay face to know. Carl has since passed away from AIDS, but I remember him as a person of exceptional dignity and grace.

My teacher, my wife's best friend, and Carl helped me understand their lives and I think made me a better person in the process.

The Constitution of the United States, which established our government, grants us free speech and gives all citizens the right to vote, should not be dishonored by this effort to write in discrimination. I am clearly sensitive to some of my colleagues' concerns about potential biblical and social implications of legalized same-sex marriage, but I oppose this proposed amendment because I believe the Constitution is not the proper instrument to set or reject such policy. That debate should happen in our State legislatures.

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

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICAN NEEDS A NEW DIRECTION TO COMBAT TERRORISM

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because I believe that America needs a new direction to secure our country and combat terrorism. We need a new direction so our children and our children's children will live in a safer and more secure world.

On May 1, 2003, President Bush declared that Iraq is free, that major combat operations in Iraq have ended. Yet in more than 3 years since, our world has not become a safer place, and our military families continue to suffer. More than 130,000 U.S. troops are serving in Iraq and more than 10,500 members of the selected Reserves have been deployed more than three times. Ninety-seven percent of the National Guard combat and special operations battalions have been mobilized since September 11, 2001, and the average tour of duty for National Guard members is 342 days.

□ 1945

Two thousand five hundred fifty-three of our men and women have paid the ultimate price. That includes 11 members that I represent from East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley: Private First Class Jose Casanova, age 23. Lance Corporal Manuel Ceniceors, age 23. Lance Corporal Francisco Martinez Flores, age 21. Sergeant First Class Kelly Bolor, age 38. Lance Corporal Benjamin Gonzalez, age 23. Corporal Jorge Gonzalez, age 20. Sergeant Atanacio Haro-Marin, age 27. Specialist Leroy Harris-Kelly, III, age 20. Corporal Stephen Johnson, age 24. Corporal Rudy Salas, age 20. And, lastly, Marine Corporal Carlos Arellano, age 22.

Another 10,327 have been injured, not including more than 8,500 who have been injured so badly that they cannot return to action. I strongly support our servicemen and women that have performed admirably under these very difficult conditions. These conditions have been worsened by the lack of needed supplies, and our men and women continue to serve without a plan to secure the peace.

Today, the Government Accountability Office testified that Congress had appropriated $430 billion to the Department of Defense for the global war on terror. According to the GAO, and I quote: ''Neither the DOD nor the Congress reliably know how much the war is costing Americans.''

The GAO also testified that the U.S. can expect to incur significant costs for an unspecified time in the future, requiring decision-makers to consider difficult trade-offs. As the Nation faces increasing long-range fiscal challenges, we have seen some of the trade-offs already.

Critical programs remain unfunded and underfunded by this administration, and our veterans and their families are the ones that are suffering. There are $3 billion worth of gaps in needed services for our Nation's veterans. The number of new veterans waiting for health care appointments at the VA, the Veterans Administration, has risen by 400 percent over the last 2 years.

Funding for Homeland Security is suffering too. And as a result, because of the administration's misguided policies, first responder grants have been slashed by 59 percent, and only 5 percent of containers entering the U.S. ports are screened, and there are 800 fewer border patrol agents than what was authorized in the 9/11 Commission Act.

Afghanistan is also suffering from the Bush administration's misguided policies. Secretary Rumsfeld wrote in a letter today that the United States maintains its strong commitment to Afghan's success. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership, he said.

Yet the people in Afghanistan are not feeling that commitment. Between November 2003 and April 2006, the number of insurgents has quadrupled from 5,000 to 20,000. The average number of daily attacks by insurgents has climbed by more than 70.

The Afghan Defense Minister recently stated that Afghanistan needs five times the number of security forces to address the issue of a resurgent Taliban. And without them, Afghanistan is in real danger of collapse. If his warnings were not enough, just today the Taliban recaptured two towns in the southern province of Pakistan's border.

Despite the increasing conflict in Afghanistan, despite the lack of a plan for peace in Iraq, despite the lack of accountability for government contracts, and despite the trade-offs on homeland security, important first responder programs, the administration wants the United States to stay the course.

I could not disagree more. War and military might alone does not show strength in foreign policy rooted in a

unilateral and preemptive action which does not achieve peace for Americans. America needs a new direction

Mr. Speaker, we must seize the moment and insist on a new direction for America so our children and our children's children will live in a safer and more secure environment.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND). 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.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Ms. HERSETH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. HERSETH addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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, today, again, the newspapers of our country tell the story of more organized killings, more death, more carnage, more bombings, more escalating violence in the Middle East.

There are photos in this newspaper of fathers and relatives crying in Lebanon, and below it, young people crying in Haifa, in Israel. We all read these stories and we say, why cannot the killing stop? I as just one Member of this Congress am very proud to represent a community that knows what it will take for the killing to stop.

Toledo, Ohio, in fact, was the first community in the United States of America to elect a mayor who was of American Lebanese heritage, Michael Damas, who is no longer living. You know, I am so proud of the people of my community.

Today they came to our office in Toledo and they said, Congresswoman, we have a statement that we would like you to consider. And I thought it was so thoughtful and even-handed that I wanted to read it to the American people tonight. They asked, of course, that Americans who are in Lebanon be removed safely, and they asked us to urge the President of our country to move them out quickly.

But then they wrote, ''We the American Lebanese Descent Community of Toledo request that the war and the bombing be suspended and our U.S. Government pursue peace and save lives in the region: Americans, Israelis, Palestinians, Lebanese and others. It is a simple statement. But I think it is a much more judicious statement than the President of our country made as part of the G–8 summit the other day when using a vulgarity. The President said at one point that Syria should get Hezbollah to stop its attacks on Israel.

His statement was not even-handed, it was not comprehensive, it did not talk about peace, it did not recognize the legitimate interests of the people of this country, the people of Israel, the people of Lebanon, the people of a future Palestinian.

His statement did not talk about limiting carnage, and the retribution that characterizes the deteriorating situation in Lebanon and in adjoining countries. I am very proud of the people of the greater Toledo area for understanding what it is going to take to create peace and to initiate peace.

I am very proud to sponsor today as well, a resolution submitted by Congressman KUCINICH of Cleveland that reads as follows. It calls upon our President to appeal to all sides in the current crisis in the Middle East for an immediate cessation of violence and to commit the United States and our diplomats to multiparty negotiations with no preconditions.

And it calls upon the President to appeal to all of those sides, as the people in my community have done, for an immediate cessation of violence. Would it have not been great if President Bush, like President Reagan had done with Menachem Began when he served as Prime Minister of Israel, and asked for an immediate cessation of violence? That did not happen with President Bush.

This resolution of Mr. KUCINICH would commit the United States and our diplomatic efforts to multiparty negotiations without precondition. It would send high-level diplomatic missions to the region to facilitate such multiparty negotiations, and would include representatives from the Governments of Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, the Palestinian Authority and it would support an international peacekeeping mission to southern Lebanon to prevent cross-border skirmishes during such multiparty negotiations.

Does that not sound like a much healthier way for the world to move? There will be many resolutions offered here this week. And I ask myself, will they be as judicious as the people of our community? Will they be as full-bodied? Will they be as even-handed? Will they have a peace process envisioned at the end of this horrible, horrible road?

Will they recognize the legitimate interests of all parties concerned? And will they seek to limit carnage, or will those resolutions continue to engender hate and further retribution?

Mr. Speaker, this is a critical time for the world, not just for our country, but for so many fragile nations who really need the time to heal and the time to let democracy develop.

Mr. Speaker, I hope, with those peace-loving people of our community that peace is just ahead.

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

(Mr. SOUDER 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 New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE 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 Florida (Mr. WELDON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELDON of Florida 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 Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT 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 Louisiana (Mr. JINDAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JINDAL 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 gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. GILCHREST 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 Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BERRY 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 New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

BLUE DOG COALITION

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening as I do each Tuesday evening that the United States House of Representatives is in session, I rise on behalf of the 37-Member-strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition.

As you walk the halls of Congress, as you walk the halls of the Cannon House Office Building, the Longworth House Office Building and the Rayburn House Office Building, it is easy to spot an office that belongs to one of the 37 Members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, because you will find this poster as a welcome mat by each door of a Blue Dog member.

As you can see, today the U.S. national debt is $8,419,147,820,878 and some change. Your share of the national debt, that is every living man, woman and child, including the children born today, every American citizen's share of the national debt is $28,134.

As Members of the Blue Dog Coalition, it is what we call the debt tax, d-e-b-t, and that is one tax that cannot go away until this Republican Congress and this administration gets our Nation's fiscal house in order.

Last week, the President made a big announcement about how the deficit really was not as bad as what his White House had first thought and reported it would be. I think the best way to sum up the events of last week can be found in an editorial, July 11, 2006, from the Los Angeles Times entitled ''Another Mission Accomplished,''

And I will not read the entire editorial, but I think it sets the stage for what we plan the spend the next hour discussing this evening. It starts off like this: ''The release of the White House mid-session budget review is an annual event normally marked by a few wonkish observations and the routine updating of various spreadsheets, not by a full-dressed Presidential dog-and-pony show. But President Bush plans to preside today with Members of Congress and invited guests in attendance. By all indications, including his own, in his weekly radio address last Saturday, he plans to turn this into a celebration just in time for the fall campaign.''

The editorial from the Los Angeles times dated July 11, 2006 continues. ''This is proof, if anyone still needs it, that this administration is desperate for something to boast about. On Mr. Bush's watch, triple-digit budget surpluses have turned into annual triple-digit budget deficits.

''There is no information in the mid-session report to alter that utterly dispiriting fact. Yes, the report is expected to project that this year's deficit will be somewhat less gargantuan than last year's, probably somewhere between $280 and $300 billion versus a $318 billion shortfall in 2005.''

And it concludes, that part of the editorial, by saying, ''That is not much to crow about.'' Well, they are right. Last week the administration released its mid-session review of the budget. And after further examination, let's take a closer look at what the report actually tells us.

The report actually tells us that what we have here is another record deficit. The administration's updated estimate of $296 billion deficit makes 2006 one of the four largest deficits in our Nation's history. It is hard now to believe that we had a balanced budget in this country from 1998 to 2001. But it did not take this administration and this Republican-led Congress very long to turn fiscal responsibility into record deficits.

□ 2000

As you can see, the largest deficit ever in our Nation's history occurred in 2004 when the Republicans controlled the White House, the House, and the Senate. It was $413 billion in red ink, in hot checks, if you will.

The year 2003 was the second largest deficit ever in our Nation's history, where, for the first time in over 50 years, the Republicans controlled the White House, the House and Senate, and they gave us the second largest deficit ever in our Nation's history, $378 billion.

The third largest record deficit ever in our Nation's history again occurred while the Republicans controlled the White House, the House, and the Senate. It was in 2005, and it was $318 billion deficit, the third largest deficit ever in our Nation's history.

Then this year, the President has a press conference, has a grand ceremony and event to announce that the deficit for fiscal year 2006 is only $296 billion, the fourth largest deficit ever in our Nation's history. I think the editorial in the Los Angeles Times had it right when it said that is not much to crow about.

The administration's updated estimate of $296 billion deficit, as I indicated, makes 2006 the fourth largest deficit ever in our Nation's history.

While this number represents an improvement over the 2005 deficit of $318 billion, it still ranks as the fourth largest deficit ever in our Nation's history. These revised estimates do not account for the extent of our budget problems, because they include in the calculation the annual surpluses in Social Security.

The first bill I filed as a Member of Congress when I got here in 2001 was a bill to tell the politicians in Washington to keep their hands off the Social Security trust fund. This Republican Congress refused to give me a hearing or a vote on that bill, and now we know why, because they are raiding the Social Security trust fund to fund tax cuts for those earning over $400,000 a year.

They are raiding the Social Security trust fund to fund this out-of-control deficit, this out-of-control debt, this reckless spending that we are seeing occurring in our Nation's capital and the way the Republican leadership is running our government and this country. In fact, when the Social Security surplus is excluded, as it should be, the 2006 deficit is not $296 billion; it is $473 billion.

Now, throughout the evening we are going to be talking more about this, including projected surpluses, and how they became huge deficits. I will talk more about that in a little bit, but I have been joined this evening by the cochair for policy for the Blue Dog Coalition, JIM COOPER from Tennessee. Glad to have you with us this evening.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you. I thank my good friend from Arkansas, and I appreciate your excellent summary of our fiscal situation.

Because Americans lead busy lives, we were happy to get a little bit of good news last week, or what we thought was good news. The President and the administration certainly built it up as if it was good news. I am glad that the deficit is looking a little smaller than the White House had predicted. That is good news, and I appreciate that.

But it is still very important for Americans to put that in perspective. As my friend from Arkansas points out, it is good news, and it is not the largest deficit in American history; it is only the fourth largest deficit in American history. So that is something to be grateful for.

But it reminded me a little bit of telling somebody, hey, the good news is your cancer is in remission. Well, that is good news. It is good news the cancer is in remission, but the bad news is you still have cancer.

What we are concerned about as Blue Dogs is not a temporary deficit. Sometimes the Nation has to run a temporary deficit. What we are concerned about are permanent structural deficits, deficits that grow beyond our possible ability to repay the debt, deficits that strangle economic growth, that prevent us from building a stronger country for our kids and grandkids.

We are worried about deficits that hurt the middle class, because as my friend from Arkansas mentioned, there is a $28,000 per citizen tax on everyone in America, man, woman or child. That is a lot of money to be born owing the country before you even have a chance to grow up or earn a living.

But I know there are some folks out there who are watching us, and they are saying, well, the Blue Dogs, they are only mentioning absolute deficit dollars. They are not putting it in perspective with gross domestic product. I would agree that is a percent of GDP; we should look at it that way too. You can say, well, this is not a percent of GDP, the largest or even the fourth largest deficit in American history.

But I brought along a document tonight that I hope everyone in the country will pay attention to. I first saw it when it was in the Wall Street Journal a few weeks ago. It is a document not from the Republican Party or the Democratic Party or anybody connected with politics. It is a document from one of the Nation's leading business organizations called Standard & Poor's. Now, they are a Wall Street outfit, but they are supposed to be the neutral judges of all the debt from all the corporations, and all the debt from all the countries, and all the debt from all the States and cities and towns in America and around the world, S&P, it is called, Standard & Poor's.

Well, they issued this document on June 6, 2006. To read this document, you wouldn't dream that any President of the United States could have a press conference a few weeks later championing good news. Because what Standard & Poor's says about America is this, it says that we are in such bad fiscal shape, and getting worse every year, that by the year 2012, which isn't that far away, it is just 5 or 6 years away, that America will lose its AAA credit rating for the first time in our modern history.

Now, American Treasury bonds, bills and notes are considered basically the gold standard of all debt instruments on the planet.

If you need to put your money in a safe and secure place and you want it to earn interest, Treasury bonds are safer than putting it in any bank as a deposit or putting it anywhere else, because they are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government.

There is no sounder financial instrument than the U.S. Treasury bond, and we should be proud of that.

But what Standard & Poor's is saying, as a result of the deficits my friend from Arkansas is talking about, in just 5 or 6 years, we will lose our AAA credit rating. Now that is not just like getting, say, an A minus instead of an A in class. What it means is higher interest payments.

It means that every time that America borrows money in the future, possibly forever, we will have to pay more for it. Because the good part about being a solid credit risk is that you pay the lowest possible rate of interest. You are able to borrow money cheap. But by losing our AAA credit rating, our interest rates are going up.

There is another bad part to this S&P report. Again, this is not a political report; this is from one of America's leading business organizations. It says that by the year 2020, which isn't that far away either, that our Treasury bonds will basically be junk bonds, or what they call below investment grade.

Now, that is such a far cry from our current AAA rating, the rating that U.S. bonds have had for all of modern American history; it is a literal tragedy to see America go from AAA ratings down to junk bond ratings in just a few short years as a result of the work of one administration, the current administration.

Because even though the current administration will be out of office in 2008, the impact of their fiscal policies stretches for decades beyond their time in office.

That is why this S&P report is so significant. They state carefully that it is not a prediction. They are hoping, and I suppose praying, that America will change course drastically from what we have seen from the current Republican administration.

But they do say that although it is not a prediction, it is a simulation of what will happen if we don't change course.

So it is a lot like that famous old ship, the *Titanic*. When they saw the iceberg in the distance, did they change course? No, they hit it head on.

Well, America still has a few short months and years to change course before we hit the iceberg that literally destroys America's credit rating and forces us to borrow money at much higher rates of interest, possibly for the rest of American history. That is permanent structural damage to our economy. Permanent structural deficits caused that damage that hurt the outlook for our kids and grandkids.

So I hope that people will go to the Internet, check out the Standard & Poor's Web site, look for this publication dated June 5, 2006, and check it out for yourself. Some of it is written in fairly technical business language. You will see that a number of nations face the problem that we do in America of an aging population. Some nations face it more severely than we do. But we are in such a fundamental imbalance that it is important to note that one of the primary causes for that imbalance is actually the crowning achievement of the Bush administration domestic policy.

They cite specifically the U.S. position has worsened since 2003 because of the new drug benefit added to Medicare, which increases estimated health care costs by nearly 2 percent of GDP annually by 2050 and accounts for one-quarter of the rise in spending on the elderly.

Now, we all want seniors to have medicine. Medicine needs to be affordable. But the Wall Street Journal pointed out in their editorial that in the Bush legislation that Congress passed and was signed into law that only $1 out of $16 by that bill would only actually buy medicine, only $1 out of every 16 would go for its intended purpose.

Mr. ROSS. The gentleman from Tennessee makes an excellent point about how we have gotten into this mess with these record deficits. This Republican Congress, this administration, gave us a so-called Medicare part D prescription drug plan. We all want our seniors to be able to have access and be able to afford the medicine that they so desperately need.

I thought that we were going to pass a bipartisan meaningful benefit for our seniors, but instead we passed a bill that was written by the big drug manufacturers. In fact, the chairman of the committee writing the bill at the time left the committee and took a multimillion dollar job as the head of PhRMA, the association in Washington D.C. that represents the big drug manufacturers.

Now, every State in America, through its Medicaid programming was negotiating with the drug manufacturers to reduce the cost that those States paid for the Medicaid program.

When this Medicare part D program became law, they shifted Medicare-eligible seniors that were poor enough to be on Medicaid away from Medicaid and on to Medicare and into a bill that actually has language in the legislation.

I thought this was going to be a bill to help our seniors with the high cost of medicine. But this legislation included language that said the Federal Government shall be prohibited from negotiating with the big drug manufacturers to bring down the high cost of medicine. So we shifted that cost from the States and, more importantly, from the big drug manufacturers, because every manufacturer out there was giving rebates to the States to help offset the costs to the program and to a Federal program where the Federal Government is prohibited from negotiating with the big drug companies to bring down the high cost of medicine.

We are seeing, as a result of that, our seniors not really getting that good of a benefit, and yet it is a program that is causing these deficits to go up.

Mr. COOPER. Today's news revealed that that bait-and-switch provision that was in the Medicare drug bill would add $2 billion in additional profits to our drug companies this year.

□ 2015

Two billion, billion with a B as in boy, and that is all as a result of this sleight of hand that was engineered in part by the committee chairman who left public service to go almost immediately to represent special interests, and not just any special interests but the very drug manufacturers for whom he had just passed legislation.

Think of $2 billion extra profits in one year as a result of this technical switch with a lot of seniors from Medicaid to Medicare, from a program that could negotiate for lower prices to a program that cannot, by law, negotiate for better prices. It is outrageous, and some of the money in that horribly expensive bill has gone not to help seniors get more affordable medicine but to line the pockets of major drug companies.

We are all thankful for the life-saving discoveries they make. We are thankful for the research and development, but I am less thankful for the advertisement and TV ads where things

like that are not helping create new medicines. They are more trying to make money off people's illnesses, and there has got be a better way.

We live in the greatest country on Earth in the history of the world, and there has got to be a better way to do is this so we can live within our means, so we can treat everybody fairly, so we can build a stronger middle class, so we can be strong so we can be the world's only superpower. We are not living up to that potential today.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I thought we would go through a few other charts that we have here and talk a little bit more about this entire discussion about the projected surpluses becoming huge deficits.

When the administration took office in 2001, it had an advantage no administration in recent times has enjoyed, a 10-year projected surplus of $5.6 trillion. The administration has replaced that surplus with recurring deficits and a record debt.

When the cost of items omitted from the mid-session review are included, the deterioration in the budget between 2002 and 2011 is about $8.5 trillion. Although these numbers are more positive than the administration's February forecast, which some would argue they inflated again so they could boast now about not having the largest deficit in our Nation's history, but rather having the fourth largest deficit in our Nation's history, they unfortunately do not represent any significant improvement in the long-term budget picture.

Even the administration's 5-year forecast, which omits the cost of certain planned policies, never shows a deficit smaller than $123 billion. You can see here in 2000 we had a real, actual surplus of $236 billion. In 2001, we had a projected surplus of $281 billion, which in the end result ended up being $128 billion.

And then as you can see, when the Bush administration came here, surpluses were projected for year 2002 through 2006; but, instead, we got deficits, including four of the largest deficits ever in our Nation's history. This was a $610 billion swing from having the first balanced budget in 40 years to having the largest debt ever in our Nation's history and having the largest deficit ever in our Nation's history for 4 years in a row.

I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee.

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, we are, like all Americans, acutely aware of the terrible tragedy that happened on September 11, 2001. That changed the world, but we should not make the mistake of thinking that it gave us all these deficits because that claim, that belief would not be true. It hurt our economy temporarily, but we were already pulling out of a shallow recession, and we have not been in a recession since. So you cannot blame our overall economic condition for that.

What it is the result of, and again, do not take our word for it, read the reports from the Heritage Foundation, a conservative foundation think tank here in Washington; read the reports of the CATO Institute, a libertarian organization, and they will tell you, they will demonstrate to you that the Bush administration is the biggest-spending administration since at least Lyndon Baines Johnson and probably even way before LBJ.

It has nothing to do with defense or homeland security, budget needs that are really set more by our enemies than by ourselves. It has everything to do with a wasteful and mismanaged and sometimes incompetent government like we saw in Hurricane Katrina relief.

That is a waste of taxpayer money. That is a shame for everyone because no one wants to pay more taxes. We are not for more taxes. We want every tax dollar to be spent wisely so the taxpayers think their government is on their side instead of working against them, but we really have not been seeing that and especially with these deficits.

Adding these taxes to our kids and grandkids, a tax that can never be repealed, a debt tax as the gentleman so ably described it a while ago, is limiting our growth in future years. It is crippling America's future potential. As I showed with this S&P report, it is destroying America's credit rating, and yet the administration holds triumphant press conferences as if they are announcing good news.

A lot of folks think maybe we have been cured, but the cancer is still there, and we have got to get at that cancer.

Mr. ROSS. This administration has told us for 5½ years now that if you cut taxes on folks earning over $400,000 a year, I do not have a lot of folks in my district who earn that kind of money, but this administration, this Republican-led Congress, for 5½ years has been telling us about that trickle down business, that if you cut taxes on those earning over $400,000 a year, it will eventually trickle down to everyone else and stimulate the economy and bring in new revenues and, therefore, a stronger economy and a stronger government.

Well, as you can see here, the realistic estimate shows a bleak deficit outlook for those tax cuts for people earning over $400,000 a year. All they have gotten us is in the business whereas of today our Nation is borrowing $1 billion a year, 45 percent of which we are borrowing from places like China, Japan, Hong Kong and Korea and, oh, yeah, OPEC nations.

In fact, these tax cuts for folks earning over $400,000 a year, what they have gotten us is not only a record debt and record deficit and in the business of borrowing $1 billion a day. It has also resulted in our Nation spending a half a billion dollars every day simply paying interest on the debt we have already got.

Again, as Blue Dog members, fiscally conservative Democrats, we coined the phrase the ''debt tax,'' D-E-B-T, which is one tax that cannot be cut, cannot go away until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

As you can see, we had actual deficits back in the 1980s and the 1990s; and then in 1998, under the leadership of President Clinton, we popped into a surplus, first time a Democrat or Republican had done that in 40 years. We saw a surplus. We saw a balanced budget from 1998 through 2001, and then look what happened, and then tax cuts for those earning over $400,000 a year, and we started seeing record deficits.

This administration, this Republican-led Congress have given us four of the largest deficits ever, ever in our Nation's history. The administration's estimated future deficits failed to include the full cost of items on its agenda; and once likely costs are included, the deficit is never better than $229 billion for the foreseeable future.

The true state of the budget is worse than the administration's forecast depicts because it omits certain costs. When realistic adjustments are made for omitted items, annual deficits never improve to better than $229 billion for any year over the next decade, and by 2016, the deficit grows to $444 billion.

I think it is important to note that the administration's new estimates for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan reflect a total of $110 billion for 2007, $60 billion more than the President's February budget. However, beyond 2008, the administration provides no further funding for these efforts. It is like the White House is telling us that everything will be rosy in Iraq, Afghanistan and all of our troops will be able to come home by 2008.

It is time for some truthful budgeting in our government. Based on a model presented by the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, costs for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan could run as much as $371 billion over the next 10 years, from 2007 to 2016, and this calculation is likely conservative.

I have Middle East experts at the State Department telling me that we will be in a situation that is costing us billions of dollars in Iraq at least for 10 years, some believe for as much as 30 or 35 years; and yet this administration can look the American people in the eye with an honest look and an honest face and say that there is no reason to budget for the war beyond 2008.

It is time for this administration and this Republican-led Congress to be truthful with the American people and to give this government, to give the people of this country an honest budget.

The report also estimates that the President's plan to partially privatize Social Security will worsen the unified deficit by $721 billion over the next 10 years.

Finally, the report does not include the cost of addressing Medicare physician payments which must be addressed. A long-term fix could cost

from $127 billion to $275 billion over the next 10 years in the absence of other policy changes, another omission from the numbers presented to us in this mid-year report that the President presented last week.

I am also joined this evening by our cochair for communication with the 37-member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, and that is the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) who I yield to.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS). You have been so gracious to lead the Blue Dog effort here on Tuesday nights for several weeks now, and I consider it an act of patriotism what you are doing here because, truly, it is something that the American people must know, and it is what we will do to strengthen our country and our fiscal order if we can simply pass half of the accountability measures that the Blue Dogs have put in place, the 12-step Blue Dog program that I am sure you have talked about tonight because you have talked about it so many times on the floor. Hopefully, the American people are listening and the Congress is listening that we must, in fact, bring accountability to our government.

As you said, the Blue Dogs have been fighting for greater accountability in Washington for over 10 years now. We have argued for a return of pay-as-you-go budgeting to balance our budget. And as I said, we offer a 12-step reform plan to cure our Nation's addiction to deficit spending.

We have argued that all earmarks should require written justification from a Member of Congress before being considered, and now the Blue Dogs have authored and endorsed two bills that strike at the heart of this administration's mismanagement and its fiscal mismanagement of our government.

We have introduced the Blue Dog accountability package, and one is a bill that I authored which requires the reconfirmation of any Cabinet official whose agency cannot produce a clean audit for 2 consecutive years.

The second piece of legislation, written by our colleague from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) requires an oversight hearing 60 days after the Inspector General reports waste, fraud and abuse above $1 million in any Federal Department.

I would like our audience tonight to consider these facts: in 2004, the Federal Government spent $25 billion of everyone's tax dollars, yours, mine and everyone else who pays taxes in America, $25 billion that it cannot account for.

□ 2030

Now, Mr. ROSS, you and I, when we write a check out of our account, we have a check stub. But for some reason the Federal Government has lost $25 billion in check stubs. They are our tax dollars.

That same year, 2004, only six of the 63 Pentagon departments were able to produce a clean audit, about 10 percent.

For 2005, the General Accounting Office reports that 19 of the 24 Federal agencies can't produce a clean audit or fully explain how they have spent our taxpayer dollars.

In March of 2005, the Veterans Affairs Inspector General issued a report calling for agency information systems to be upgraded for security purposes. As you probably know, no action was taken; and since that time, the personal information of millions of our veterans has been stolen or lost, putting millions of our veterans' personal information and virtually their financial history in jeopardy.

Mr. ROSS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CARDOZA. Certainly.

Mr. ROSS. Actually, my office received a call today from the GAO, and I have got some good news. We have been saying, I have been saying, that the GAO reported that 19 of 24 Federal agencies were not in compliance with all Federal accounting audit standards and could not fully explain how they had spent taxpayer money appropriated by Congress. I am here to correct that. The GAO convinced me today that that statement is not true. Here is what they tell me is true: that the GAO reports that 18 of 24, not 19; 18 of 24 major Federal agencies have such bad financial systems that they don't even know the true cost of running some of their programs. I don't really see the difference, one sounds about as bad as the other to me, but the good news is we no longer have 19 of 24 major Federal agencies that can't produce a clean audit. Instead, we have 18 of 24 major Federal agencies that have such bad financial systems that they don't even know the true cost of running some of their programs.

And yet Republican leaders in this Congress did not force these agencies to fully account for how the money was being spent before doling out billions more of taxpayer dollars for the same programs. And that is why I am so proud of our 37-member strong, fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition for coming forward, not just to criticize the Republican leadership on this. You can bet we are going to hold them accountable. But we are going to do much more than that.

We have offered up a bill, it is led by one of the founders of our Blue Dog Coalition, Mr. TANNER of Tennessee, and you have been discussing that bill in your comments tonight, and I appreciate you doing that. It is about accountability, and it is about restoring some common sense and accountability to our government.

And with that I will yield back to the gentleman from California.

Mr. CARDOZA. I thank the gentleman for the correction. I am not sure that 18 out of 24 is a whole lot better than 19 out of 24. Maybe they got one of the little departments to come into compliance. I think the year before I think it was 16 out of 24 or 23. So it is sort of like the Bush deficit numbers. You inflate them one year so you can show improvement the next. It boggles my mind that they can't find $25 billion in check stubs. You would think that they would be able to do that. But I guess when they think it is not their money, they are not so worried about it. But I have got to tell you, I am worried about it, and I know you are, Mr. ROSS, because when we lose the confidence of the American people for our voluntary tax system that we have, and when people don't think that their money is going to be used the correct way, I think this Nation is in serious, serious trouble.

Mr. ROSS. I share your concern because we have been sent here. We have been sent here by the people to be their representatives. And part of being their representatives is to ensure that their tax money is being accounted for and being spent in a meaningful way and in a way that we would deem responsible.

It kind of reminds me growing up at that little country Methodist church just outside of Prescott in Hope, Arkansas, Midway United Methodist Church. I still try to get back there every year for homecoming. My parents still go there. My mom still plays the piano there.

And growing up there at Midway United Methodist Church, every Sunday I heard the preacher talk about being a good steward. Being a good steward. And I think that the American people have sent us here and expect us to be good stewards of their tax money and make sure that it is being accounted for and make sure that it is being spent in a responsible way, a way that will help lift people up, a way that will invest in their children and their education and their future. And that is why I am so very concerned about this.

That is why we are pleased to offer up a 12-point plan for budget reform, to cure our Nation's addiction to deficit spending. That is why, as Blue Dog members, we are pleased to offer up this accountability plan under the leadership of Mr. TANNER, one of the founders of the Blue Dogs, and that is why I am so pleased to be a part of your legislation, Mr. CARDOZA, another part of our Blue Dog package, to basically tell Cabinet-level agencies that Mr. Secretary, Madam Secretary, if you can't produce a clean audit, then you have got to go back to the Senate and have a reconfirmation hearing.

And there is another bill that you have got that I am real proud of, and that is, again, about being good stewards, about the public trust that is being placed in us to come here and to represent the people from back home. They place a lot of trust in us. And when we violate that trust, when we break the laws that we helped write as Members of Congress, we shouldn't be held to the same standards as every other citizen in this country. We should be held to a much greater standard. And we should have to serve even

longer prison terms and have even bigger fines than everyone else, because if we are going to come here and violate the public trust and break the laws that we helped write, we should be held to an even more strict standard.

And I am proud of the bill that we have on that. And I will yield to the gentleman from California to describe that piece of legislation

Mr. CARDOZA. I thank the gentleman. And in fact I will describe it. But before I do, I just want to say one thing. You know, you talked about your growing up in rural Arkansas. I grew up in rural California. My grandparents were all Portuguese immigrants. They all naturalized, became legal citizens, proudest day of their lives was when they got their citizenship papers. And they imbued in me and my parents, who couldn't speak English when they were growing up, a sense of duty and responsibility. And you did the right thing.

I will never forget my grandmother, she wasn't so excited when I got into politics because she said, you know, DENNIS, that is a dirty game sometimes. And if you are going to get in that business, you just make sure you do the right thing.

And when I introduced the legislation that you described, it is really holding us to a higher standard. And the legislation says that if you break the public trust and you enrich yourself while you are standing here in the Halls of Congress that you would have to serve the time that you would get convicted for fraud or for all the other kinds of things that you can do to get put in jail, but you would have to serve a sentence enhancement for two additional years because you broke the public trust, the trust that the people gave you when you signed up to run for this office.

And I hold that sentiment very strongly, that that is something that we should all stand up and be held accountable to a higher standard if we are going to take the oath of office. So I thank you for raising that issue and that I could talk about my bill tonight.

I want to also tell you that the work that we are doing with regard to oversight and demanding that this Congress do oversight, that is one of the fundamental jobs of Members of Congress, to hold hearings and to examine where our tax dollars are going. And we simply, as a Congress, are not doing that anymore. It is part of the problem with having one-party government that there is nobody to hold it accountable. And we can't get the power of the subpoena to go in there and look and see what is going on. And we need to examine the books. We need to audit the books in a more effective way. We need Mr. TANNER's bill that says if the Inspector General finds fraud and abuse, that we will, in fact, do a hearing in the Halls of Congress. And I see you putting up a poster.

Mr. ROSS. You have been there.

Mr. CARDOZA. I have been there. We went together, and we saw, talk about waste, fraud and abuse. What we could do for $1 billion in this country is just amazing. We can educate so many kids, send our kids to college. We can do so much good for $1 billion. And here we are looking at about a half a billion dollars. You tell the story, Mr. ROSS, because this is in your district. You took me down there. We did some uncovering of some waste, fraud and abuse.

And I will yield back to the gentleman from Arkansas.

Mr. ROSS. I just want to quickly make the point as I do every Tuesday and I am going to as long as these things are still down there. But the reason that we have House Resolution 841 by Mr. TANNER and those of us in the Blue Dog Coalition, this is a bill about accountability and about holding agencies accountable. This is why we need legislation to restore accountability within our government.

I don't know how good you can see this, Mr. Speaker, but this is the airport in Hope, Arkansas. Hope used to be known for something else. Now we are known for the trailer houses, mobile homes, manufactured homes. As you can see, this is an active runway at the Hope Airport. And these are old World War II proving ground runways that are no longer being used. So FEMA decides they are going to go out and buy about 20,000 brand-new, fully furnished, microwaves built in, whirlpool tubs built in. We have been in them. We have seen them.

Mr. CARDOZA. Jacuzzi tubs. It is amazing.

Mr. ROSS. I don't know if they are Jacuzzi brand but they are whirlpool.

Mr. CARDOZA. That is what we call them where I come from, even though that might not be the brand.

Mr. ROSS. They are fully furnished, 16-foot wide, 60-foot long mobile homes, about a half a billion dollars worth of them. And they are parked here at the airport in Hope, Arkansas. Except the theory was they were going to bring them in and then take them to the storm victims from Hurricane Katrina. We are coming up on the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. And so the theory was that they were going to be coming in and then going out. This would be a FEMA staging area.

Well, they all came and never went. And as a result, they quickly filled up these old World War II-era proving ground runways and started parking them just in the hay meadow. I mean, just literally on the pasture.

And then the Inspector General noted that with the rains they were going to start sinking this past spring. Lord knows, we would love to have rain now. It is awful hot and dry in Arkansas.

But FEMA's response was not to get the homes to the people who need them. FEMA's response was to spend 4 to $7 million putting gravel on 200 acres of hay meadow pasture land at the Hope Airport to keep these mobile homes from sinking.

The bottom line is, if you can't really get a good look at it there, if you have ever wondered what 9,959 mobile homes look like, that is what it looks like. At one time we had 10,777. We finally have got it down to 9,959. But this is a better look of what it looks like. I mean, there is a fence, barbed wire fence and pasture. They are just sitting there on the areas. Here, as you can see, 16-foot wide, 60-foot long, mobile homes; 9,959 of them sitting there at the airport in Hope, Arkansas, 450 miles from the eye of Hurricane Katrina nearly a year after the storm.

Now, FEMA buys these for victims of Hurricane Katrina; and then FEMA says, well, we are not going to put them in a flood plain. Well, everybody that lost their home and their housing in Hurricane Katrina, they loss it because they lived in a flood plain.

It is time to restore some common sense to FEMA, and it is time to find a good use, a responsible use of these 9,959 mobile homes that are simply parked there at the airport in Hope, Arkansas, an example of mismanagement by a Federal agency. Example of mismanagement by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. An example of why we need to restore accountability in our government. And I am not going to let up on this until every single one of these mobile homes that taxpayers have paid for, about $400 billion worth, are put to good use.

They are not serving anybody any purpose. They are not doing anyone any good sitting in a hay meadow at the Hope Airport in Hope, Arkansas.

This is a symbol of what is wrong with this administration. This is a symbol of what is wrong with this Republican-led Congress. It is a symbol of what is wrong with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

I yield back to the gentleman from California.

Mr. CARDOZA. The gentleman is absolutely right. And it is interesting that so many of our Departments are run this way. But the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security Department, which FEMA is part of, was quoted recently as saying: ''Unfortunately, the Department had made little or no progress to improve its overall financial reporting during the whole fiscal year of 2005.'' And KPMG accounting firm was unable to even provide an opinion on the Department's balance sheet because the books were in such bad shape.

Another example is the Inspector General for NASA, in its 2005 financial statement said: ''In the enclosed report of independent auditors, Ernest & Young disclaimed an opinion on NASA's financial statements for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2005.''

□ 2045

The disclaimer resulted from NASA's inability to provide Ernst & Young with auditable financial statements and sufficient evidence to support the financial statements'' that they did

have ''throughout the fiscal year and at year end.''

Basically it is what we were talking about earlier. The Federal Government is writing checks and does not even keep its check stubs. They cannot find $25 billion of our taxpayers' money, and then they want to spend more of it. And it is just a crying shame that we cannot do a better job, and it is a crying shame that we are not doing the accounting and the investigative hearings and the oversight hearings that is the job of this Congress. It is an abdication of our duty as Members of Congress, and it is an indication that we need to change the one-party system that we have got going on here because we need to audit the books. It is just a basic fundamental necessity of running a good government. And what it means is that we have gone, like that chart you showed, from a situation where when we had a Democratic President, we were actually paying off the national debt, and now we are going in the wrong direction. We are going into a deep trough, and I see the slide that you have put up now. This is what the resulting action is. First of all, we are not able to do what we need to do for education, send our kids to college, do all the things that we need to do proactively to prepare our country for the next century, but we are having to do instead what you are about ready to talk about, Mr. ROSS.

Mr. ROSS. Since President Bush took office, the amount of foreign-held Treasury debt has more than doubled, increasing from $1 trillion to $2.1 trillion, meaning that this administration has already accrued more foreign debt than the previous 42 Presidents combined.

Let me repeat that. This President and this Republican-led Congress has borrowed more money from foreign central banks and foreign investors than the previous 42 Presidents combined.

As you can see here in 2001, the amount of money borrowed from foreign central banks and from foreign investors was $988 billion. That was troubling enough. In 2006, we are up to $2.66 trillion that has been borrowed from foreigners. Unlike deficits in earlier years, current deficits have been primarily financed by foreign investors with the rise in foreign-held debt equaling three-fourths the increase in publicly-held debt since the start of the current administration in 2001.

This rise in foreign-held debt is troubling because it makes our economy beholden to foreign creditors and represents another financial burden passed on to future generations. Foreign-held debt is fundamentally different from domestically-held debt, since the interest payments on foreign-held debt flow outside the United States of America and reduce Americans' standard of living.

The cost of servicing foreign-held debt is high. Local, State, and Federal Government interest rates to foreign investors totaled $114 billion in 2005, an amount that will grow rapidly if the Treasury continues to sell debt to foreign investors at the current rate. Compare this to only $23 billion in foreign holdings in 1993. Today, the debt, the foreign-held debt, is $2.1 trillion.

And just like David Letterman, I have got a ''top ten list.'' The top ten current lenders, again, our government is borrowing $1 billion a day. We keep passing tax cuts for those earning over $400,000 a year. And where does the money come from? We have got record deficits. Where is the money coming from to give tax cuts to those earning over $400,000 a year?

Here is the top ten: Japan, our Nation has borrowed $640.1 billion from Japan; China, $321.4 billion.

Mr. CARDOZA. Is that Communist China, Mr. ROSS?

Mr. ROSS. Yes.

Mr. CARDOZA. I thought it was.

Mr. ROSS. That would be Red China, Communist China. Our Nation has borrowed $321.4 billion from China to fund tax cuts for folks earning over $400,000 a year at home, leaving our children and grandchildren to foot the bill. That may be a tax cut for the wealthiest people in this country now, but it is nothing more than a tax increase on our children and our grandchildren.

The United Kingdom, $179.5 billion. OPEC, imagine that one, OPEC, our Nation has borrowed $98 billion from OPEC. And we wonder why gasoline is approaching $3 a gallon.

Korea, $72.4 billion; Taiwan, $68.9 billion; the Caribbean banking centers, $61.7 billion; Hong Kong, $46.6 billion; Germany, $46.5 billion. And get a load of this, rounding off the top ten: Our Nation has borrowed $40.1 billion from Mexico to fund this reckless spending, these record deficits and this record debt given to us by this Republican Congress and this administration.

Now, as members of the Blue Dog Coalition, why do we raise this issue? We have got just a few minutes left here. We raise it because our Nation is borrowing $1 billion a day. Never mind that. On top of that, we are spending a half billion dollars a day paying interest on the debt we have already got. That is a half billion dollars a day that cannot go for education, cannot go for health care, cannot go for infrastructure improvements. It has got to go to service the debt. It has got to pay back these foreign countries, these foreign central banks and foreign investors that are funding these record debts and record deficits in this country.

In fact, as you can see here, like interest payments on a family's credit card, every dollar spent on the national debt is a dollar that does not educate a child, build a road, or keep the Nation secure. Because of recent record deficits, the government's annual interest payment is the fastest growing category of Federal spending over the next 5 years and has posted double-digit percentage growth for the past 2 years. Interest payments dwarf spending on most national priorities such as homeland security, education, and veterans health care. By 2011 annual interest payments under the administration's proposed budget will grow to $302 billion, a 38 percent increase from the current level. As you can see here, the amount of money we are spending in billions of dollars simply paying interest on the national debt, this is the amount of money going to pay interest on the national debt. This is the amount of money being spent to educate our children. This is the amount of money going for homeland security to keep America secure. And this is the amount of money going to keep our promises to our veterans. America's priorities are not being met because of this Republican Congress' reckless fiscal mess.

It is time to put an end to these record debts and record deficits. It is time to restore some common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government.

Mr. Speaker, if you have any comments, questions, or concerns about what we have been discussing in the past hour, you can e-mail us, Mr. Speaker, at bluedog@mail.house.gov. That is bluedog@mail.house.gov.

I want to thank the gentleman from California for joining me this evening.

As we are out of time, I want to leave you with how we started. When we started this hour, I pointed out the national debt was $8,419,147,820,878 and that every living soul in America's share was $28,134.

Just in the hour that we have been discussing trying to restore some common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government, this number, our Nation's debt has gone up another $41 million, roughly another $41.666 million.

As members of the 37-member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, we come to this floor of the United States House of Representatives every Tuesday night to talk about restoring accountability and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government. We are going to hold the Republican leadership accountable for the reckless spending and the lack of accountability, but we are also going to offer up commonsense solutions to fix these problems, to ensure that we leave this country just a little bit better than we found it for the next generation.

Does the gentleman from California have any closing thoughts?

Mr. CARDOZA. I would just like to say thanks to the gentleman from Arkansas for hosting this once again. We are going to make fiscal responsibility a priority for this Congress. It is a shame that we have not spent more time this year dealing with these matters. Hopefully, we will have some oversight hearings.

Thank you for conducting this, and I just say we will continue to work on it.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be here this evening as the designee of the majority leader talking about something that is hugely, hugely important that we debated on the floor of this House just an hour, maybe a couple of hours ago. And, Mr. Speaker, I am referring, of course, to the issue of stem cell research.

And just to kind of set the record straight, Mr. Speaker, I think my colleagues know that my prior profession was that of a physician, in particular as an OB–GYN doctor, a pro-life OB–GYN practicing in my home State of Georgia for 26 years.

And the President, before I was elected to the Congress in August of 2001, Mr. Speaker, made a very careful, thought-out and prayerful decision in regard to the issue of the utilization of embryonic stem cells for medical research in hopes of providing someday a cure for some of the devastating diseases that we have seen in public service announcements on television. And God rest his soul, I remember when the actor Christopher Reeve was talking about the suffering and his malady. And, of course, there are other conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's and Type 1 diabetes and things like that. And we do hope and every Member in this body hopes on both sides of the aisle, and the other body as well, that someday we can have our medical research scientists, doctors, develop an ability to treat some of these chronic, devastating diseases. Spinal cord injury certainly is another.

But the President made this decision because people were asking that we take so-called extra embryos from fertility clinics that couples were not going to use. Maybe they had already achieved a pregnancy or several pregnancies and they had completed their family, and yet because of egg retrieval and in vitro fertilization, there were these embryos that they owned, that belonged to them, that were frozen in case they may, indeed, need them at some point in the future. Some couples, of course, would decide that their family was complete and maybe never utilize these frozen embryos. And there was a great push on the President to say, well, look, these are just extra. They are going to be thrown away anyway. The couples have already said they do not want them and they are willing to donate them to research.

And the research we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, is the ability to take those embryos and obtain from them something that we refer to as a stem cell and, by definition, an embryonic stem cell. But to do that, as the President so clearly understood, these embryos were being destroyed. Although it is not an exactly accurate description, Mr. Speaker, but you may say you just put these embryos in a blender and you churn them up and you centrifuge and at some point you are able to obtain these stem cells from the embryo that have a potential in cell culture, when stimulated in a certain way, to grow into really any tissue of the body.

□ 2100

There are three different germ cell layers. But in essence, if you needed cardiac muscle in somebody who, let's say had a heart attack, and you could go these embryonic stem cells and make them become heart muscle, maybe you could repair that scar on a person's heart. Or if you could stimulate these cells to become nerve tissue, maybe indeed you could help a little child overcome the paralysis of spina bifida, or someone with a spinal cord injury like a very fine Member of this House that suffered a spinal cord injury as a teenager, maybe you can do that.

The President recognized that. But basically what he said to the American people in August of 2001, shortly before 9/11, is we are not going to allow taxpayer dollars to be used for research on embryonic stem cells if it results in the destruction of human life, the destruction of one life, maybe a near perfect life if you allow it to continue to live, in the hopes that you can, in destroying it, take these beginning cells that we call stem cells from the embryo and help somebody else.

Well, the President basically said, Mr. Speaker, and I agreed with him then and I agree with him wholeheartedly today as a pro-life physician and a pro-life Member of this body, there was too much collateral damage. In this instance the collateral damage was the death of that embryo, that little baby, if you will. We call them fetuses, embryo, fetus, but really it is just a little baby.

Today at a press conference, and they have been on the Hill before, but it was so poignant to me, Mr. Speaker, to see some of these so-called snowflake babies, these little embryos from these fertility clinics, these so-called extras.

Well, lo and behold, almost 100 couples were aware of the availability and asked some of these parents who owned those embryos, they were their children and they had the right to throw them away or donate them, offer them up for adoption, and some infertile couples, many of whom we saw today, Mr. Speaker, at this press conference, legally adopted these so-called throwaway, extra, nobody-wants-them embryos.

In two instances, they resulted in twins, identical twins. I saw 3-year-old boys, beautiful boys and 2-year-old identical twin girls, two different couples of these almost 100 moms and dads who have adopted these so-called throwaway embryos.

Mr. Speaker, those two sets of twins that me and some of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle saw today at this press conference, they could have been in that blender churned up so that their stem cells would have been obtained in hopes of helping somebody else. These precious lives would not exist today.

This President has got a great heart and great compassion and great morality, and he was absolutely right to say we will fund with taxpayer dollars through our National Institutes of Health and our great scientists, we will fund research programs on stem cells, even embryonic stem cells, but not if it means we have got to kill some little baby in harvesting these cells.

Well, the President was right. But last year in this body a couple of our Members sponsored a bill, one from both sides of the aisle, two well-respected Members, I have great respect for both of them, and Members in the other body wanted to bring this back up and felt that because the American public, after watching all of these public service announcements that tug at your heartstrings, felt that, well, you know, why not? You are just going to throw away those embryos.

Of course, these public service announcements didn't talk about the snowflake babies, the children that we saw today. If they had known that, if the public knew that, if they were fully aware of it, then all these polling numbers that we hear, Mr. Speaker, that say, oh, the public wants this, the public demands this, and therefore we have this bill last year, the so-called Castle-DeGette bill, H.R. 810, I believe is the number, and it passes this body. It passes this body with support on both sides of the aisle, but with more Democrats supporting it than Republicans. But, in any regard, it passes.

Now, today the bill passes the Senate. I think they thought they were going to roll the table over there, Mr. Speaker. It barely got the number of votes that it needed, 63, where they require that supermajority in the other body.

So this bill is going to go to the President. It is going to go to the President. It is probably already on his desk, or maybe it will be there tomorrow, and he is going to be expected to vote yea or nay on that bill.

Well, not only do I hope and pray, I have every confidence that this President will stand by his convictions, as he always has, Mr. Speaker, whether we are talking about fighting the Global War on Terrorism or protecting the sanctity of human life, and this President will veto that bill, as well he should.

Now, one of the main purposes of me wanting to speak tonight about values, and there is hardly anything more important in this body that we attend to than the values of this great Nation that we are so privileged to be a part of, we have another bill. We have a bill that was voted on in this body today, and it required by the rules of procedure a two-thirds vote here, and it did

not quite get it today. It did not quite reach that two-thirds majority for passage. But I want to just kind of talk about the bill a little bit and make sure my colleagues fully understand.

I hope there was no confusion about this alternate bill, because really what the bill does, Mr. Speaker, as you well know, it is an opportunity to obtain these same embryonic stem cells without destroying or even harming human life. I as a physician know that it can be done. In fact, it is occurring in nature. I will describe that in just a minute.

My colleague who really drafted the original bill, ROSCOE BARTLETT, the gentleman from Maryland, this became the Senator Santorum bill, which was a companion bill, I commend the Senator from Pennsylvania, a great pro-life, traditional, family value member in the Senate, for introducing it.

Mr. Speaker, that bill in the Senate today, it didn't pass with 63 votes like the H.R. 810 Castle-DeGette bill did. The vote was 100–0. I don't even know how many days you are going to have 100 members. That is 100 percent of that body present. It is hard at any time to have 100 percent of the membership present, what with family emergencies and things like that.

But today there were 100, the whole body was there, and a 100–0 vote in support of Senator SANTORUM, Representative BARTLETT's bill, that would fund research, would let taxpayer dollars go to grants to research ways of obtaining those embryonic and other stem cells without harming or destroying human life.

Now, it passed. That bill passed here in the House of Representatives this afternoon, but it was just a little bit short of the two-thirds that it needed. We will bring that bill back to this floor, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, and it will pass, and it will pass with bipartisan support, and it will pass with a wide majority. A great plurality of the 435 Members of this body will support this bill. Two-thirds? No, but darn close to it.

It will go to the President and the President will have an opportunity then to say to the American people, you know, I have got these two pieces of legislation here. They both seek the same result. Each bill wants to give us an opportunity to put money behind research so that we can obtain these embryonic and adult stem cells so we can help people like the late great Christopher Reeve and Michael J. Fox, a person who we all know who is suffering from parkinsonism, but, more importantly, the folks back home, our constituents, our families, our moms, our dads, our grandparents, the child I see in church every Sunday who is suffering from a spinal condition, probably spina bifida.

We know that we can put money behind research in either one of these two bills, the Castle-DeGette bill, H.R. 810, I think it is, or the Santorum-Bartlett bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, the difference, there is a huge difference in the two bills. As I told my colleagues on the floor today, the difference is in the collateral damage. In the Bartlett-Santorum bill, it allows this research to be able to obtain stem cells maybe from an embryo by a biopsy without harming the fetus, or the Castle-DeGette bill, where you do it the easy way. You just kind of take the embryo and you churn it up and centrifuge off the stem cells.

I heard someone on the floor today say that, well, you know, we know that method, the blender method, if you will, where we destroy human life in obtaining the embryonic stem cells. It is easy. It is proven. We can do it. There is no problem. Why should we go through another step or two and go to the trouble and the expense? And, oh, by the way, it may take a year or two before we know for sure that it works. Why don't we just go ahead and do the expedient thing?

Goodness gracious, my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, the expedient thing results in the loss of life, and no snowflake embryos, no precious twins that we saw today. It is just not the right thing to do.

This President, thank God, has a good heart and a good soul and a good mind, and he knows that. And I think God has given him the wisdom to make the right decision in this case and resist the pressure and understand that the polling, many times when you ask the question, if people don't fully understand what I am trying to explain to my colleagues tonight, and anyone that might be listening at home, that when you look at it and understand what I am saying, and it is the absolute truth, what I am saying, I think the American people overwhelmingly would say, well, gee, you know, if we are going to get the same result and there is already good research going on with Federal funding, our tax dollars supporting research on adult stem cells and we are getting good results, all right.

In the private sector, Mr. Speaker, there is plenty of research going on in regard to embryonic stem cells, some of which are obtained from those fertility clinics with the destruction of human life. If private people want to do that, the State of California recently enacted legislation or had a statewide referendum that called for $3 billion in funding for embryonic stem cell research that does result in the death of the embryo, and that is fine. If they want to do that in California with their money, fine. If private companies want to do it, that is fine.

But to say to the American people, who I am sure I am correct in saying that more than 50 percent of them, certainly in my district in my State, in my hospital, are strongly pro-life, and to say to them, you know, we are going to take your money, your tax dollars, and we are going to put it and let NIH researchers or give grants to doctors, wherever, you know, I am not going to name names or places, but these higher institutes of learning, these ivory towers, they are great, we love them.

□ 2115

We are all for research. But not if it means that my money is going to fund something that results in yet another of the 40 million abortions that have occurred since Roe versus Wade in 1973.

Make no mistake about it. Every time you kill one of these embryos to obtain those stem cells in this manner, that is yet another abortion. So I am very much opposed to the Castle-DeGette bill and very much in favor, Mr. Speaker, of the Santorum-Bartlett bill.

As I say, I will in all probability have an opportunity to discuss the rule on the floor tomorrow. We will have another vote, and I will be very proud when my colleagues again on both sides of the aisle, there is no way this should be a partisan issue, really it is not. We will have the votes to do the right thing. I really look forward to that.

I wanted, Mr. Speaker, to take a little time to talk about another issue or two, that may come up as we refer this week to ''values week'' in the House of Representatives. Although we sometimes get criticized and people say, well, you know, you all are spending all of your time talking about values, and yet we have got a deficit and we have got a national debt and we need to fund this and we need to fund that, and, you know, your responsibilities, you are neglecting them as you concentrate on these value issues like the Marriage Protection Act, the Pledge of Allegiance Protection Act and this stem cell issue, I would say to those critics, and some of them were sitting in this Chamber earlier today, from my perspective, I was sent here to do more than just spend people's money.

Obviously we have to spend money, and we try to do it wisely. But the values of this country are just as important to me in my representation of those values, not just my district in Georgia, the 11th, or my State, but of this entire country, because we need to show the world that we are a country of strong moral values.

I think that that in itself will help us as much as anything in the Middle East, to let the rest of the world know that we have character in this country and we stand by these values. And so for us to spend time standing up for the sanctity of marriage is an example. I would say to my constituents and my colleagues, that is no waste of time. That is no waste of time at all.

The debate that we had on the floor today on this constitutional amendment resolution brought to us by the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE), a champion really of this cause, and I commend her for her ethics both in this 109th Congress and the 108th Congress.

We fell a little short of the two-thirds vote we needed. They fell a little

short in the other body. But I will guarantee you the American people would not fall short on this issue. 88 percent of them in 45 States have already addressed this issue, and they cannot wait for this Congress with its two-thirds majority vote in both bodies to give them the opportunity to vote on this constitutional amendment, defining, defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman.

I just went over, Mr. Speaker, before we started the time and looked at the dictionary. It is right to my left as we come into the door, these hallowed halls. And you see Members looking at it all the time. This happens to be the Random House Webster's dictionary.

And listen to what they say about the definition of marriage. ''The social institution under which a man and a woman establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitments and religious ceremony''.

That is what we are talking about. And when Members stand up and criticize and say, oh, well, what about Federalism and the power of the States? Well, the States regulate issues such as age of consent and consanguinity and the rules of civil procedure and inheritance, and that does not change at all.

But it just says that these activist judges, because of a constitutional amendment that I know one day soon we will pass, that the definition, the definition of marriage is that union between a man and a woman.

You know who benefits the most from that, Mr. Speaker? You know who benefits the most, my colleagues? It is the children of that marriage. And do not call me a bigot for my strong feeling that a child needs a mother and father. I feel very strongly about that. And this is not a racial issue. There is no hatred involved, certainly not in the heart of MARILYN MUSGRAVE, a great mom and wife.

The Members who really overwhelming support this. This is the right thing to do. And that is why we spend time in this body, precious time, yes, talking about our values. Our values in regard to the sanctity of life and the sanctity of marriage.

Finally, finally, Mr. Speaker, let me talk a little bit about the pledge of allegiance. You know, I believe it is the 9th District Court, we sometimes refer to it as the Left Coast, but that would be California for those of you who do not know to what I am referring.

For those judges to say that it is unconstitutional to have ''under God'' in the pledge of allegiance and make a decision, Federal District Court in the 9th District which includes California and the rest of the left coast, and to have that say that that is applicable to the entire United States.

No way. No way. And we are not going to have it. We are not going to have it. And we will be discussing and voting on a bill tomorrow that says to these activist judges, you keep your legal opinions away from our pledge of allegiance. And you have no authority whatsoever to speak in regard to that.

If some State court wants to do it, or some State supreme court wants to do it, and their citizens are happy with that, so be it. But not at the Federal level. I am going to tell you, if they did it in the State of Georgia we would throw the bums out. They may embrace them in California, but that is what makes this country great, you know. I mean, different strokes for different folks.

But we want to make absolutely sure that these activist Federal judges are not taking God out of our pledge of allegiance, and we will have that vote, we will have the discussion. We will have a good discussion and then we will have Members kind of go on record. Those votes will not be by voice vote, I can assure you of that, Mr. Speaker. They will be record votes, and I really, really look forward to that debate.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to conclude. I think we have a very important Rules Committee meeting coming up in a few minutes and I need to be at that noting.

But again, I wanted to thank the leadership. I want to thank my Speaker and my majority leader, our conference chairwoman, DEBORAH PRYCE for giving me the opportunity to come here tonight and spend 30 or 40 minutes talking about values and how important they are on our side of the aisle, and how important they are to the leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I think that they are important really to all Members in this chamber. They are good people, good hearts, men and women on both sides of the aisle. And I think sometimes, though, we have a tendency to lose our way. We have got a lot of pressure, a lot of interest groups, a lot of advocates, stakeholders wanting us to do certain things.

But I think if we stop and think, we do not get in too big a hurry, realize that we do not have to rush to destroy embryos, as an example. If we take our time, we can get the same result with no collateral damage. That is what it is all about. That is what values are all about.

So I am happy to have had this time to share my thoughts with my colleagues. I look forward to tomorrow, another day, when we will have some very, very significant value votes in this body. With that, I yield back.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCMORRIS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 28 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2154

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SESSIONS) at 9 o'clock and 54 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 2754, ALTERNATIVE PLURIPOTENT STEM CELL THERAPIES ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. GINGREY, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109–578) on the resolution (H. Res. 924) providing for consideration of the Senate bill (S. 2754) to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. KIND (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today before 3:00 p.m. on account of illness.

Ms. MCKINNEY (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

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 Mrs. MCCARTHY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MCCARTHY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKELTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HERSETH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BERRY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OWENS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. JINDAL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, July 24 and 25.

Mr. SHAYS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GILCHREST, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Mrs. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 42. An act to ensure that the right of an individual to display the flay of the

United States on residential property not be abridged.

H.R. 810. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for human embryonic stem cell research.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 3504. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of tissue from fetuses gestated for research purposes, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 55 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 19, 2006, 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:

8611. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Review Committee, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions of Delegations of Authority (RIN: 0560-AH51) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8612. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, APHIS, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Add Denmark to the List of Regions Free of Exotic Newcastle Disease [Docket No. 02-089-3] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8613. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Bacillus Thuringiensis Cry1A.105 Protein and the Genetic Material Necessary for Its Production in Corn in or on All Corn Commodities; Temporary Exemption From the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2006-0554; FRL-8076-5] received July 13, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8614. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Bacillus Thuringiensis Cry2Ab2 Protein and the Genetic Material Necessary for Its Production in Corn in or on All Corn Commodities; Temporary Exemption From the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2006-0553; FRL-8076-6] received July 13, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8615. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting a request for FY 2007 budget amendments for the Department of Health and Human Services; (H. Doc. No. 109-123); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

8616. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting Withdrawal of the request for a FY 2006 fully offset proposal to provide additional funds for the Information Technology Systems account within the Department of Veterans Affairs; (H. Doc. No. 109-124); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.

8617. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting authorization of the enclosed list of officers to wear the insignia of the next higher grade in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8618. A letter from the Director, Pentagon Renovation and Construction Program Office, Department of Defense, transmitting the sixteenth annual report on the Pentagon Renovation and Construction Program, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2674; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8619. A letter from the Regulations Coordinator, CMS, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's final rule — Medicaid Program; Citizenship Documentation Requirements [CMS-2257-IFC] (RIN: 0938-AO51) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8620. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Montana; Revisions to the Administrative Rules of Montana; Direct Final Rule [EPA-R08-OAR-2006-0009; FRL-8187-6] received July 13, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8621. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — PM2.5 De Minimis Emission Levels for General Conformity Applicability [EPA-HQ-OAR-2004-0491; FRL-8197-4] (RIN: 2060-AN60) received July 13, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8622. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plan; Idaho [Docket # R10-OAR-2005-ID-0001; FRL-8191-6] received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8623. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Rhode Island Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference [RI-44-1222c; FRL-8185-1] received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8624. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Virginia; NSR in the Ozone Transport Region [EPA-R03-OAR-2005-VA-0015; FRL-8796-8] received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8625. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Redesignation of the City of Weirton PM-10 Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Maintenance Plan [EPA-R03-OAR-2005-0480; FRL-8197-1] received July 12, 206, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8626. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Indiana; Final Approval of State Underground Storage Tank Program [FRL-8195-8] received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8627. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Integrated Iron and Steel Manufacturing Facilities [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0083; FRL-8196-6] (RIN: 2060-AE48) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8628. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Operating Permits and Program; State of Missouri [EPA-R07-OAR-2005-MO-0005; FRL-8192-4] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8629. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Operating Permits Program; State of Nebraska [EPA-R07-OAR-2006-0476; FRL-8192-5] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8630. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Plan, Conformity Budgets, Emissions Inventories; State of New Jersey [Docket No. EPA-R02-OAR-2006-0342; FRL-8191-2] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8631. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Kentucky Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Nonattainment New Source Review [EPA-R04-OAR-2004-KY-0004-200610; FRL-8191-5] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8632. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Mississippi Prevention of Significant Deterioration and New Source Review [EPA-R04-OAR-2005-MS-0001-200612; FRL-8191-4] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8633. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; West Virginia; Redesignation of the Charleston Nonattainment Area to Attainment and Approval of the Area's Maintenance Plan [EPA-R03-OAR-2005-0548; FRL-8191-9] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8634. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Colorado; Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revision [EPA-R08-RCRA-2006-0382; FRL-8193-2] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8635. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Delegation of National

Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Source Categories; State of Arizona; Maricopa County Air Quality Department; State of California; San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District; State of Nevada; Nevada Division of Environmental Protection [EPA-R09-OAR-2006-0496; FRL-8190-1] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8636. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Miscellaneous Organic Chemical Manufacturing [EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0121; FRL-8190-5] (RIN: 2060-AM43) received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8637. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Standards of Performance for Stationary Combustion Turbines [EPA-HQ-OAR-2004-0490; FRL-8033-4] (RIN: 2060-AM79) received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8638. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Utah: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revision [EPA-R08-RCRA-2006-0127; FRL-8193-5] received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8639. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator, Environmental Protetcion Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Standards of Performance for Stationary Compression Ignition Internal Combustion Engines [EPA-HQ-OAR-2005-0029, FRL-8190-7] (RIN: 2060-AM82) received July 6, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

8640. A letter from the Director, International Cooperation, Department of Defense, transmitting Pursuant to Section 27(f) of the Arms Export Control Act and Section 1(f) of Executive Order 11958, Transmittal No. 16-06 informing of an intent to sign the Force Protection Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and the United Kingdom, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2767(f); to the Committee on International Relations.

8641. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a six month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Liberia that was declared in Executive Order 13348 of July 22, 2004, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) 50 U.S.C. 1703(c); to the Committee on International Relations.

8642. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to the Taiwan Relations Act, agreements concluded by the American Institute in Taiwan between May 25, 2006 and June 9, 2006, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 3301; to the Committee on International Relations.

8643. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the initial report as required by Section 6 of the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act of 2005; to the Committee on International Relations.

8644. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, certification regarding the proposed license for the export of defense articles and services to the Government of Germany (Transmittal No. DDTC 035-06); to the Committee on International Relations.

8645. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8646. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8647. A letter from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8648. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8649. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8650. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8651. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, transmitting the 2005 management report and statements of internal controls of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8652. A letter from the Senior Vice President and Chief Accounting Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas, transmitting the 2005 management report of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8653. A letter from the President and Chief Executive Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, transmitting the 2005 Statements on System of Internal Controls of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8654. A letter from the Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, transmitting the 2005 management report and statements on system of internal controls of the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 9106; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8655. A letter from the Executive Director, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting a report on the Administration's category rating system, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3319; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8656. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8657. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8658. A letter from the Acting General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8659. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Senior Executive Service Pay (RIN: 3206-AL01) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform.

8660. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting the Office's final rule — Veterans' Preference (RIN: 3206-AL00) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Government Reform.

8661. A letter from the Director, Executive Services Staff, Social Security Administration, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8662. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's final rule — Grazing Administration — Exclusive of Alaska [WO-220-1020-24 1A] (RIN: 1004-AD42) received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Resources.

8663. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's designation of additional members of the Special Exposure Cohort of a class of employees from the Nevada Test Site in Mercury, Nevada, under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8664. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's determination on a petition on behalf of a class of workers from the Pacific Proving Grounds, Enewetak Atoll to be added to the Special Exposure Cohort (SEC), pursuant to the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (EEOICPA); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8665. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report on the feasibility of Federal Drug Courts, pursuant to Section 753 of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005, Pub. L. 109-177; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8666. A letter from the Comptroller, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, transmitting the Audited Financial Statements of NSDAR for the Fiscal Year ending February 28, 2006, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 1102; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

8667. A letter from the Acting Senior Procurement Executive, (OCAO), GSA, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Federal Acquisition Regulation; Federal Acquisition Circular 2005-10; Introduction [Docket FAR-2006-0023] received July 12, 2006, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Science.

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. GINGREY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 920. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2389) to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance (Rept. 109–577). Referred to the House Calendar.

Mr. GINGREY: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 924. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (S. 2754) to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos (Rept. 109–578). 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. SAM JOHNSON of Texas:

H.R. 5822. A bill to establish the America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids Program; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. KELLY:

H.R. 5823. A bill to amend certain provisions of the Federal Power Act added by the Energy Policy Act of 2005 relating to the use of eminent domain authority for the construction of electric power lines, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. HART:

H.R. 5824. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Labor to award a grant to the Manchester Bidwell Corporation to improve, expand, and replicate the arts and technology education centers operated by such corporation; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

By Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico (for herself, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. RENZI, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. EVERETT, Mr. THORNBERRY, Mr. ROGERS of Michigan, Mr. GALLEGLY, and Mr. ISSA):

H.R. 5825. A bill to update the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), 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. KENNEDY of Minnesota:

H.R. 5826. A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to provide for greater flexibility in the number of levels of benefits that may be offered by certain health plans under chapter 89 of such title; to the Committee on Government Reform.

By Mr. BOEHNER:

H.R. 5827. A bill to make Celina, Ohio, eligible for certain rural development loans and grants; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. DINGELL:

H.R. 5828. A bill to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to remove the reimbursement requirement for evacuation as a result of war, civil unrest, or natural disaster; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mrs. MCCARTHY (for herself and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia):

H.R. 5829. A bill to direct the Librarian of Congress and the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution to carry out a joint project at the Library of Congress and the National Museum of African American History and Culture to collect video and audio recordings of personal histories and testimonials of individuals who participated in the Civil Rights movement, and for other purposes; to the Committee on House Administration.

By Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (for himself, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MICA, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MARCHANT, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. BARTON of Texas, Mr. BURGESS, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. GOHMERT, Mr. HALL, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, and Mr. SESSIONS):

H.R. 5830. A bill to amend section 29 of the International Air Transportation Competition Act of 1979 relating to air transportation to and from Love Field, Texas; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. BOEHNER (for himself, Mr. HYDE, and Mr. LANTOS):

H. Res. 921. A resolution condemning the recent attacks against the State of Israel, holding terrorists and their state-sponsors accountable for such attacks, supporting Israel's right to defend itself, and for other purposes; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. ENGEL, and Mr. CROWLEY):

H. Res. 922. A resolution condemning cross-border terrorism against Israel by Hamas and Hezbollah and the complicity in these acts of terrorist aggression by Syria and Iran; to the Committee on International Relations.

By Mr. SHAW:

H. Res. 923. A resolution condemning the recent attacks against the State of Israel; to the Committee on International Relations.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 147: Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 450: Mr. MCCOTTER and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 500: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 947: Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H.R. 998: Mr. COBLE.

H.R. 1002: Mrs. NAPOLITANO.

H.R. 1130: Mr. EDWARDS.

H.R. 1241: Mr. DOYLE.

H.R. 1366: Mr. WELDON of Florida and Mr. BONILLA.

H.R. 1372: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 1384: Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 1471: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 1526: Mr. FARR.

H.R. 1558: Mr. OWENS, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, and Mr. GUTIERREZ.

H.R. 1704: Mr. BLUMENAUER and Mrs. DRAKE.

H.R. 1898: Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 1996: Mr. CASE.

H.R. 2421: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 2429: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.

H.R. 2561: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.

H.R. 2568: Mr. SIMMONS and Mr. MCCOTTER.

H.R. 3137: Mr. JINDAL.

H.R. 3195: Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD and Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 3282: Mr. CAMPBELL of California.

H.R. 3352: Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 3427: Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 3641: Mr. PAYNE.

H.R. 3875: Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania and Mr. RENZI.

H.R. 4188: Mr. MEEHAN.

H.R. 4236: Mr. SHUSTER.

H.R. 4264: Mr. ABERCROMBIE and Mr. HAYES.

H.R. 4366: Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 4491: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 4537: Ms. LEE.

H.R. 4597: Mrs. MALONEY and Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 4710: Mr. GONZALEZ and Mr. MILLER of Florida.

H.R. 4771: Ms. BALDWIN.

H.R. 4910: Mr. UPTON and Mrs. MYRICK.

H.R. 4925: Ms. MCKINNEY.

H.R. 4953: Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. PETRI, and Mr. CONYERS.

H.R. 5005: Mr. NUSSLE, Mr. BISHOP of Utah, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

H.R. 5013: Mr. LATHAM and Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 5022: Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. WALSH, and Mr. SPRATT.

H.R. 5072: Mr. LEACH.

H.R. 5092: Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. NUSSLE, and Mr. BISHOP of Utah.

H.R. 5100: Ms. BALDWIN and Mr. PETRI.

H.R. 5120: Mr. CLYBURN.

H.R. 5134: Mr. JINDAL and Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 5140: Mr. STARK.

H.R. 5167: Mr. LOBIONDO.

H.R. 5171: Mr. PITTS.

H.R. 5185: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 5206: Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 5242: Mr. THORNBERRY.

H.R. 5339: Mr. PAYNE and Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H.R. 5381: Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts.

H.R. 5388: Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 5453: Ms. HART.

H.R. 5455: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 5465: Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. BERMAN, and Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 5474: Mr. BROWN of South Carolina.

H.R. 5478: Mr. GILLMOR.

H.R. 5482: Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California and Mr. FORD.

H.R. 5499: Mr. JEFFERSON.

H.R. 5535: Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 5588: Mrs. JONES of Ohio.

H.R. 5608: Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. DAVIS of Florida, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, and Mr. TOWNS.

H.R. 5637: Mr. MANZULLO.

H.R. 5671: Mr. ETHERIDGE, Mr. MEEKS of New York, and Mr. JONES of North Carolina.

H.R. 5682: Mr. CULBERSON, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. MCCAUL of Texas.

H.R. 5685: Mr. REYNOLDS, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. WEINER, Mr. HIGGINS, Mr. OWENS, Mr. NADLER, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. KUHL of New York, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ.

H.R. 5704: Mr. GINGREY.

H.R. 5712: Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 5714: Mr. DEFAZIO, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. WEXLER, and Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California.

H.R. 5743: Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas.

H.R. 5755: Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. CARDOZA, Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, Mr. CHANDLER, Mr. ROSS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. POMEROY, and Mr. MCINTYRE.

H.R. 5756: Mr. TANCREDO.

H.R. 5766: Mr. PENCE, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. HERGER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CULBERSON, Ms. HART, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. WAMP, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. GERLACH, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. RENZI, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. MORAN of Kansas, Mr. HAYES, Miss MCMORRIS, Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, and Mr. LATHAM.

H.R. 5784: Mr. MEEK of Florida and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 5785: Mr. COSTELLO.

H.R. 5805: Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. POE, and Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

H. J. Res. 90: Mr. MCNULTY.

H. Con. Res. 222: Mr. MCNULTY and Mr. NEY.

H. Con. Res. 346: Mr. HYDE.

H. Con. Res. 347: Mr. MICHAUD.

H. Con. Res. 390: Ms. BEAN and Mr. TERRY.

H. Con. Res. 406: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H. Con. Res. 416: Mr. JEFFERSON and Mr. DOYLE.

H. Con. Res. 434: Mr. CONYERS.

H. Con. Res. 435: Mr. FOSSELLA.

H. Con. Res. 438: Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, and Mr. ISTOOK.

H. Con. Res. 448: Mr. HALL, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. WELDON of Florida.

H. Res. 79: Ms. WATSON, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. HENSARLING, and Mr. PAUL.

H. Res. 295: Mr. WHITFIELD.

H. Res. 603: Mr. CALVERT.

H. Res. 784: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Res. 790: Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. CLYBURN, and Ms. LEE.

H. Res. 863: Mr. ISSA.

H. Res. 871: Mr. KIRK, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, Mr. GERLACH, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. PETRI, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. BASS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. PLATTS, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire, Mr. GILCHREST, Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico, and Mr. WALSH.

H. Res. 888: Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan.

H. Res. 901: Mr. HINOJOSA, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. CLEAVER, and Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.

H. Res. 908: Mr. MCNULTY.

H. Res. 911: Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. WYNN, Mr. SHERMAN, Mr. STARK, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, and Mr. MARSHALL.

H. Res. 912: Mr. BERRY, Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. GORDON, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Ms. HOOLEY, Mr. CASTLE, Mr. CAMPBELL of California, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. SIMMONS, Mr. GOODE, Mr. KIRK, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. LEWIS of California, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. BRADY of Texas, Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. MELANCON, Mr. COBLE, Mr. PEARCE, Mr. BOEHLERT, and Ms. BERKLEY.