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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. HIRONO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC, *July 16, 2007*.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAZIE K. HIRONO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for 5 minutes.

MADE IN CHINA

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I have a longer speech today which I will insert for the record, but I want to highlight some of the key points.

During the debate over granting China permanent normal trade relations status, proponents argued that economic liberalization would lead to political liberalization in China, that exposing China to the West's ideas and values would lead them to play a more constructive role in the international community, and that the U.S. and other industrialized nations could influence China through economic activity to better respect the rights of its citizens to fundamental human rights.

Instead, we have seen why the protection of basic liberties should not come second to economic growth. The China today is worse than the China of yesterday, or of last year, or of the last decade.

And now, in addition to all of the horrible things the Chinese government does to its own citizens, it is doing to other countries' citizens as well.

Just read the headlines:

Toothpaste from China containing an industrial solvent and prime ingredient in some antifreeze.

Chinese-made Thomas the Tank children's trains slathered in lead-based paint, a substance that is toxic if swallowed.

Unsafe food products from China including prunes tinted with chemical dyes, dried apples preserved with a cancer-causing chemical, scallops and sardines coated with putrefying bacteria, and mushrooms laced with illegal pesticides.

Five types of farm-raised shrimp and fish from China banned by the FDA because they are so contaminated from unsafe drugs in China's polluted waterways.

Malfunctioning fireworks from China responsible for critical injuries, including in my hometown of Vienna, Virginia on July the 4th.

Chinese-made tires sold without a critical safety feature that prevents the tread from separating from the tire.

Within a year, China will also be the biggest source in the world of greenhouse gases from all the new coal-fired power plants being built.

I could take several 1-hour special order speeches to detail China's egregious human rights record:

Slave labor camps;

Religious persecution, including torture and imprisonment of Catholic bishops, Protestant church leaders, Muslim worshipers, Falun Gong followers, and Buddhist monks and nuns;

Human organ harvesting and selling;

Sophisticated system of espionage against the U.S. government and American businesses;

World's leading producer of pirated products.

Then there's China's foray into Sudan, selling weapons to the very government orchestrating the genocide in Darfur.

And despite all of these abhorrent acts, China was still awarded the honor of hosting the 2008 Olympics.

Where is the outrage over China's unacceptable behavior in the Congress and in the administration? The facts are before us. The United States can no longer say that things are improving in China.

Next time you make a purchase and you see the words ''Made in China,'' think of the poisoned toothpaste, the contaminated food, the polluted waterways and airspace, the exploding tires, malfunctioning fireworks, the human rights abuses, and the intimidation of religious leaders.

Madam Speaker, imagine a country where factory workers have no workplace safety, labor or environmental protections and are required to work 80-hour weeks for no more than $110 per month to produce goods for export.

Imagine a country which boldly supplies missiles and chemical weapons technology to countries that support or harbor terrorists.

Imagine a country that oversees a network of espionage operations against American companies and the U.S. government.

Imagine a country which tortures and imprisons Catholic bishops, Protestant church leaders, Muslim worshipers, Falun Gong followers, and Buddhist monks and nuns just because of their faith and systematically destroys churches and confiscates Bibles.

Imagine a country which has a thriving business of harvesting and selling for transplant kidneys, corneas and other human organs

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from executed prisoners who are thrown in prison with no trial or sentencing procedures.

Imagine a country which maintains an extensive system of gulags—slave labor camps, also known as the ''laogai''—as large as existed in the former Soviet Union that are used for brainwashing and ''reeducation through labor.''

Sadly, none of this is imaginary. Such a nation exists. It is the People's Republic of China.

Sadly, too, that's just part of the list of egregious actions.

In 2006, the Chinese government arrested 651 Christians that we know of. Currently, China has 6 Catholic bishops in jail and another 9 under house arrest. Renowned human rights advocate Rebiya Kadeer has watched from exile as the Chinese government arrests and beats her family members in her homeland.

Late last year, western mountain climbers captured on videotape a horrifying scene: Chinese police shooting from their North Face tents at a group of Tibetan refugees crossing Nangpa Pass. A 17-year-old Buddhist nun was killed and several others were wounded.

There are some who assert that human rights are something that should come once stability has been attained. They say that protection of human rights comes second to attaining economic power and wealth. We must reject that notion.

During the debate over granting China permanent normal trade relations status, proponents argued that economic liberalization would lead to political liberalization in China, that exposing China to the West's ideas and values would lead them to play a more constructive role in the international community, and that the U.S. and other industrialized nations could influence China through economic activity to better respect the rights of its citizens to fundamental human rights and the unfettered practice of their faith.

Instead, we have seen why the protection of basic liberties should not come second to economic growth. The China of today is worse than the China of yesterday, or of last year, or of the last decade. China is not progressing. It is regressing. It is more violent, more repressive, and more resistant to democratic values than it was before we opened our ports to freely accept Chinese products.

And now, in addition to all of the horrible things the Chinese government does to its own citizens, it does to other countries' citizens as well. It poisons children in Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Australia, with toothpaste containing an industrial solvent and prime ingredient in some antifreeze. This toothpaste was marketed under the brand name ''Mr. Cool.''

Some 1.5 million wooden toys in the Thomas the Tank Engine line of children's trains were recalled after manufacturers discovered that the Chinese-made toys were slathered in lead-based paint, a substance that is toxic if swallowed.

China continues to send American consumers adulterated and mislabeled food products, including prunes tinted with chemical dyes, dried apples preserved with a cancer-causing chemical, scallops and sardines coated with putrefying bacteria, and mushrooms laced with illegal pesticides.

Food and Drug Administration inspectors who traveled across the world to investigate the recent mass poisoning of U.S. pets stemming from tainted pet food from China arrived at two suspected Chinese factories, only to find the factories had been cleaned out and all equipment dismantled.

On June 28, the FDA banned the import of five types of farm-raised shrimp and fish from China because they are so contaminated from unsafe drugs in China's polluted waterways.

A recent NPR story described how garlic from China outsold garlic grown in California for the first time last year. China began dumping garlic at U.S. ports below cost in the 1990s. Hefty tariffs kept the garlic imports at bay for a few years, but since 2001, imports of Chinese garlic have increased fifteen-fold.

Several Fourth of July celebrations in my district, including in my hometown of Vienna, VA, included malfunctioning fireworks that injured 11 people, including children and an infant. These fireworks came from China.

Some 450,000 imported tires were recalled from Foreign Tire Sales after it was discovered that the Chinese-made tires were sold without a critical safety feature that prevents the tread from separating from the tire. A blown tire can cause the driver of the vehicle to lose control of his or her car and crash.

China is one of the world's leading producers of unlicensed copies of goods ranging from movies and designer clothes to sporting goods and medications. According to the Motion Picture Association of America, 93 percent of DVDs sold in China are unlicensed copies. The MPAA, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other industry groups say that despite stricter Chinese enforcement, product piracy is growing amid China's booming economic expansion.

China is building a new coal-fired power plant every week and within a year will be the biggest source in the world of greenhouse gases. It is building factories and infrastructure all over the developing world, but we have no solid data on China's plans or programs. A recent editorial in The Washington Post reported that World Bank experts estimate that toxic air and water in China kill some 710,000 to 760,000 Chinese each year.

During a recent visit to Sudan, Chinese President Hu Jintao promised to build a new palace for the Sudanese president, Omar al-Bashir, despite Bashir's role in orchestrating the ongoing genocide in Sudan's Darfur region. This is in addition to the recent Amnesty International report that China is selling weapons to the Sudanese government, which are then being used to kill and maim innocent civilians in Darfur.

China bullies neighboring Taiwan, repeatedly threatening to launch missiles from the mainland for Taiwan's refusal to accept China's claims of sovereignty over the democratically governed territory.

And despite all of these abhorrent acts, China was still awarded the honor of hosting the 2008 Olympics. The Olympic Games: an event designed to lift up ''the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles,'' according to its own charter. Does China's behavior sound like a ''good example'' to the rest of the world? Or that it is reflecting ''fundamental ethical principles'' that all nations should aspire to?

Amnesty International reports that the Chinese government is rounding up people in the streets of Beijing that might ''threaten stability'' during the Olympic Games, and is detaining them without trial. Human Rights Watch reports that the Chinese government is tightening restrictions on domestic and foreign media, in an effort to control what information leaks out about China's repressive and violent nature during coverage of the Olympics.

China has even gone so far as to claim it will ''force rain'' in the days leading up to the Olympics, in order to have clear skies for the Games. They intend to fire rocket shells containing sticks of silver iodide into Beijing's skies, provoking a chemical reaction that will force rain—despite mixed reviews on the soundness of this science.

China's desperation to conceal its true character leading up to the Games smacks of the Nazi bid for the Olympic Games. Analysts are likening the 2008 Beijing Olympics to the 1936 Olympics, in which Nazi Germany soft-pedaled its anti-Semitic agenda and plans for territorial expansion, fooling the international community with an image of a peaceful, tolerant Germany under the guise of the Olympic Games.

Like the Nazi regime in 1936 Berlin, the Chinese government is preparing for the Olympics by hiring U.S. firms to handle public relations and marketing for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Where is the outrage over China's unacceptable behavior? The facts are before us. The United States can no longer say that things are improving in China.

But China would have America and the world believe that is the case. China has hired a number of large lobbying firms in Washington, DC to push China's agenda with the U.S. government. Documents from the Department of Justice show these lobbyists as having a significant presence on Capitol Hill, including almost 200 meetings with Member offices between July 1, 2005 and December 31, 2006.

America must be a country that stands up for basic decency and human rights. America must speak out on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves—men and women who are being persecuted for their religious or political beliefs. Our foreign policy must be a policy that helps promote human rights and freedom. Not a policy that sides with dictators who oppress their own citizens.

Next time you make a purchase, and you see the words ''Made in China,'' think of the poisoned toothpaste, the contaminated food, the polluted waterways and airspace, the exploding tires, malfunctioning fireworks, the human rights abuses, and the intimidation of religious leaders. Remember that China poses a threat not only to its own citizens, but to the entire world.

American businesses have an opportunity to capitalize on China's failure to protect the safety of its food exports. American businesses should seize this opportunity by reclaiming their place in the global market. The United States government and American consumers must be vigilant about protecting the values that we hold dear.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, I am here to discuss why past efforts to stop

illegal immigration into our country have failed.

Over the past several decades, immigration policy in our country has been somewhat confused and unfocused to the point that there is widespread and deepening concern that our current policies regarding immigration are not working. Poorly designed policies and weak enforcement of immigration laws have led to disturbing vulnerabilities in this country to our security, and the millions of illegal immigrants currently in our country continue to belittle the naturalization process.

From a national security perspective, preventing illegal entry and reducing those individuals illegally present in the United States is an imperative. An uncontrolled immigration system encourages the circumvention of immigration laws and is a clear invitation to those who wish to take advantage of our openness to cause this Nation harm.

Congress and the President must take credible steps to reduce illegal immigration. Federal, State and local law enforcement must be allowed to enforce existing immigration law. But because of the current lack of enforcement, the illegal population in the United States will continue to grow, the burden on local communities will increase, the stresses on civil society will become greater, and border security will become more expensive while remaining just as ineffective. Furthermore, this failure to enforce our immigration laws is tremendously unfair to the millions who obeyed the law and went through the rewarding process of obtaining legal citizenship.

Most individuals and families that immigrate to the United States, whether legally or illegally, come seeking economic opportunity. We respect that. However, unlike previous generations, a generous welfare, education and health system with generous eligibility draws a disproportionate rate of poor and low-skilled illegal immigrants to the United States. These thousands of low-skilled immigrants that pour into our country illegally each year drain precious resources from Federal, State and local governments.

In my State as in other States, they need temporary workers. I understand that. A balanced and well-constructed temporary worker program should diminish the incentives for illegal immigration by providing an additional option for legal temporary labor and, in combination with other reforms, reduce over time the current population of illegal aliens. This would foster better national security and serve a growing economy. Such a temporary worker program would be a valuable component of a comprehensive immigration reform proposal. I recognize that.

Nevertheless, my colleagues, enthusiasm for such a program in theory must be moderated by serious concerns not only about the failures of such programs in our past attempts and in other countries, but also regarding how a new program would likely be implemented and operate in practice. An ill-defined and poorly constructed temporary worker program would make the current problems of immigration policy unfortunately even worse.

In the mid 1980s, Congress advocated amnesty for long-settled illegal immigrants and considered it reasonable to adjust the status of what was then a relatively small population of illegal aliens. In exchange for allowing aliens to stay, border security and enforcement of immigration laws would be greatly strengthened, in particular through sanctions against employers who hired these illegal immigrants.

However, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, did not solve our illegal immigration problem. Indeed, the lessons of that policy experiment are clear. From the very start, there was widespread document fraud by applicants. Unsurprisingly, the number of people applying for amnesty far exceeded projections, and there proved to be a failure of political will in enforcing new laws against employers.

Two decades later, the Senate proposed another bill specifically designed to allow the overwhelming majority of illegal immigrants to legally live and work in the United States from day one and eventually to become permanent residents and then citizens. This was a form of amnesty and that is why it failed.

Securing a future where America's borders are no longer porous, its laws are respected, and illegal labor is replaced by legal workers and legal immigrants is an achievable objective that we can accomplish. More than any other nation in history, our country and its system of equal justice and economic freedom beckons not only the downtrodden and the persecuted but also those who seek opportunity and a better future for themselves and their families. But by allowing millions of illegal immigrants to remain in the United States without providing any new significant security guarantees at the border is unacceptable.

We must control our borders first, then enforce the rules and regulations at the border with more security border guards. Only after that is done should we look at a policy concerning the illegal immigrants in this country. That is what the American people want.

Secure our borders now, Madam Speaker.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord God of power and might, this Nation stands before You with a contrite heart, seeking Your holy will.

Bless this House of Representatives in their work of fashioning laws that will bind Your people together in social concord and lasting values.

Lord, drive out demons of doubt and despair. Replace manipulation and cynicism with the renewed Spirit of faith and freedom, that all citizens of this country may participate actively in working to achieve and maintain the common good, always calling upon Your holy name, 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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HINOJOSA 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.

MURDER OF JOURNALISTS

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, in the last few years, 30 foreign journalists have been murdered in a country torn by war. Violence against reporters is so severe that one American journalist has recently fled back to the United States. The would-be assassins have reportedly even be hired to come to America to track these reporters down.

Madam Speaker, I'm not talking about violent Iraq. I am talking about the murder of reporters in Mexico, second highest murder rate in the world for reporters, next to Iraq.

One of the vicious violent drug cartels, the Zetas, made up of former Mexican military officers, are targeting journalists who report on their drug activities. Now these dope dealing thugs claim they will just come to the United States, because of our porous borders, and kill these journalists.

The United States should heed the warnings reported by these courageous journalists, that these drug cartels are easily criss-crossing the Texas-Mexico border and bringing more drug violence to America and Mexico.

Homeland Security should seize control of our border before the cartels seize the lives of any more journalists.

And that's just the way it is.

NATIONAL GUARD PASSES RECRUITMENT GOALS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, America's National Guard is taking a crucial role in the global war on terrorism. They make up a vital part of our deployed forces, serving our country to stop terrorism overseas, protecting American families. I am proud the National Guard exceeded its recruitment goals for the month of June, which reflects the new greatest generation.

Through the month of May, the National Guard has 351,400 troops. Numbers have not been this high since November 2001. As a 31-year veteran of the Army National Guard, I understand the importance of their mission as explained by Captain James Smith.

I am particularly grateful my former unit, the 218th Brigade, is serving in Afghanistan, where they're actively working to train the Afghani police and army.

As the father of four sons in the military, I am grateful for each and every American who decides to serve. Our all-volunteer Armed Forces are making the ultimate sacrifice, and today democracy is more widespread throughout the world than any time in history protecting American families.

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

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on July 16, 2007, at 9:53 am:

That the Senate passed S. 975.

Appointments: British-American Interparliamentary Group, National Council of the Arts, Vietnam Education Foundation, Senate National Security Working Group.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

APPOINTMENT AS INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE HOUSE FOR THE 110TH CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule II, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the joint appointment by the Speaker, the majority leader, and the minority leader of Mr. James J. Cornell of Springfield, Virginia, to the position of Inspector General of the House for the 110th Congress, effective January 4, 2007.

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 after 6:30 p.m. today.

FDIC ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2547) to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to prevent misrepresentation about deposit insurance coverage, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2547

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 ''FDIC Enforcement Enhancement Act''.

SEC. 2. ENFORCEMENT AGAINST MISREPRESENTATIONS REGARDING FDIC DEPOSIT INSURANCE COVERAGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 18(a) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) FALSE ADVERTISING, MISUSE OF FDIC NAMES, AND MISREPRESENTATION TO INDICATE INSURED STATUS.—

''(A) PROHIBITION ON FALSE ADVERTISING AND MISUSE OF FDIC NAMES.—No person may—

''(i) use the terms 'Federal Deposit', 'Federal Deposit Insurance', 'Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation', any combination of such terms, or the abbreviation 'FDIC' as part of the business name or firm name of any person, including any corporation, partnership, business trust, association, or other business entity; or

''(ii) use such terms or any other sign or symbol as part of an advertisement, solicitation, or other document,

to represent, suggest or imply that any deposit liability, obligation, certificate or share is insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, if such deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is not insured or guaranteed by the Corporation.

''(B) PROHIBITION ON MISREPRESENTATIONS OF INSURED STATUS.—No person may knowingly misrepresent—

''(i) that any deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is federally insured, if such deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is not insured by the Corporation; or

''(ii) the extent to which or the manner in which any deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, if such deposit liability, obligation, certificate, or share is not insured by the Corporation to the extent or in the manner represented.

''(C) AUTHORITY OF FDIC.—The Corporation shall have—

''(i) jurisdiction over any person that violates this paragraph, or aids or abets the violation of this paragraph; and

''(ii) for purposes of enforcing the requirements of this paragraph with regard to any person—

''(I) the authority of the Corporation under section 10(c) to conduct investigations; and

''(II) the enforcement authority of the Corporation under subsections (b), (c), (d) and (i) of section 8,

as if such person were a state nonmember insured bank.

''(D) OTHER ACTIONS PRESERVED.—No provision of this paragraph shall be construed as barring any action otherwise available, under the laws of the United States or any State, to any Federal or State law enforcement agency or individual.''.

(b) ENFORCEMENT ORDERS.—Section 8(c) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1818(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(4) FALSE ADVERTISING OR MISUSE OF NAMES TO INDICATE INSURED STATUS.—

''(A) TEMPORARY ORDER.—

''(i) IN GENERAL.—If a notice of charges served under subsection (b)(1) of this section specifies on the basis of particular facts that any person is engaged in conduct described in section 18(a)(4), the Corporation may issue a temporary order requiring—

''(I) the immediate cessation of any activity or practice described, which gave rise to the notice of charges; and

''(II) affirmative action to prevent any further, or to remedy any existing, violation.

''(ii) EFFECT OF ORDER.—Any temporary order issued under this subparagraph shall take effect upon service.

''(B) EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF TEMPORARY ORDER.—A temporary order issued under subparagraph (A) shall remain effective and enforceable, pending the completion of an administrative proceeding pursuant to subsection (b)(1) in connection with the notice of charges—

''(i) until such time as the Corporation shall dismiss the charges specified in such notice; or

''(ii) if a cease-and-desist order is issued against such person, until the effective date of such order.

''(C) CIVIL MONEY PENALTIES.—Violations of section 18(a)(4) shall be subject to civil money penalties as set forth in subsection (i) in an amount not to exceed $1,000,000 for each day during which the violation occurs or continues.''.

(c) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 18(a)(3) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828(a)) is amended—

(A) by striking ''this subsection'' the first place such term appears and inserting ''paragraph (1)''; and

(B) by striking ''this subsection'' the second place such term appears and inserting ''paragraph (2)''.

(2) The heading for subsection (a) of section 18 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (12 U.S.C. 1828(a)) is amended by striking ''INSURANCE LOGO.—'' and inserting ''REPRESENTATIONS OF DEPOSIT INSURANCE.—''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

First, I would like to thank Chairman FRANK for moving this legislation through the committee and bringing it to the floor today.

I would also like to thank Congresswoman BIGGERT for sponsoring this legislation with me. I was happy to have such a strong proponent of consumer protection join me in introducing this bill.

We hear all types of stories about trademarks registered to a specific company being used inappropriately. In some cases, multimillion-dollar lawsuits are filed for copyright and patent infringement.

We have the same thing going on with the FDIC. Their trusted logo is being used to deceive consumers, but they have no recourse.

H.R. 2547 will allow the FDIC to levy cease and desist orders against any persons or entity that uses the FDIC's name, logo, abbreviation or any other FDIC-recognized indicator fraudulently and without the FDIC's permission. This legislation will also allow the FDIC to impose fines of up to $1 million per day against any person or entity engaging in falsely representing the FDIC's backing of a product.

This is important consumer protection legislation that is necessary to preserve the trusted name of one of the most recognized Federal agencies. In fact, the FDIC believes this legislation is necessary to help them to continue to fight financial scams.

I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 2547.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would like to, first of all, thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) for his work on this bill, and I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2547, the FDIC Enforcement Enhancement Act.

In May I was pleased to join my colleague, Congressman SIRES, in introducing this bill which gives the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation new tools to protect our constituents from financial scam artists.

After the great stock market crash in 1929 and the numerous bank closures during the Great Depression, Congress passed, in 1933, the Glass-Steagall Act, which created the FDIC. Congress created this independent Federal agency and charged it with a most important mission: To instill and maintain ''the stability and the public's confidence in the Nation's financial system.''

For over 70 years, the FDIC has worked to meet its mission. The FDIC's name, seal, abbreviation, and other indicators are well known, and they are symbols that the public uses to identify a financial institution or a product as being legitimate, federally insured, sound, and supervised. These are easily identifiable FDIC symbols and they can be found in a range of places, from the bank teller's window to a financial institution's Web site.

Unfortunately, over the years, criminals have taken advantage of the public's confidence in the FDIC name and used it for malicious purposes. Criminals have fraudulently used the FDIC's name to deceive consumers, most often the elderly, into saving or investing their money in a criminal's illegitimate product offered by a criminal's illegitimate financial institution.

For example, some of you may have received or known individuals who have received e-mails from these scam artists. The e-mails, that are actually from criminals, claim to be from the FDIC and request that the e-mail recipient provide highly sensitive, online banking information. However, the e-mails are fraudulent and not from the FDIC.

Current law prohibits this criminal activity, but H.R. 2547 strengthens the FDIC's enforcement powers so that it can take immediate action against criminals that are fraudulently hiding behind the good name of the FDIC and to immediately stop such criminal activity so that the consumer's money doesn't disappear.

The act allows the FDIC to enter cease and desist orders against this conduct and impose fines up to $1 million per day on any person who falsely represents the nature of the product offered or the FDIC's insurance coverage available. In addition, the proposed legislation would clarify the FDIC's authority to seek injunctive relief against such person under the rules of any Federal, State or foreign court of competent jurisdiction.

The language of this act is similar or is identical to the act of 2005, the Financial Service Regulatory Relief, section 615, which the Committee on Financial Services approved by a vote of 67–0 in November of 2005. The House has approved this bill by a voice vote.

So I would urge my colleagues to again support the language and vote for today's bill. This bill gives the FDIC the ability to help prevent our constituents from becoming victims of financial scam artists and, like Glass-Steagall, aims to give our constituents confidence in the Nation's financial system.

Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SIRES. 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 gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2547, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SIRES. 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 motion will be postponed.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1980) to authorize appropriations for the Housing Assistance Council.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1980

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 ''Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. ASSISTANCE TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL.

(a) USE.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may provide financial assistance to the Housing Assistance Council for use by such Council to develop the ability and capacity of community-based housing development organizations to undertake community development and affordable housing projects and programs in rural areas. Assistance provided by the Secretary under this section may be used by the Housing Assistance Council for—

(1) technical assistance, training, support, and advice to develop the business and administrative capabilities of rural community-based housing development organizations;

(2) loans, grants, or other financial assistance to rural community-based housing development organizations to carry out community development and affordable housing activities for low- and moderate-income families; and

(3) such other activities as may be determined by the Housing Assistance Council.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated for financial assistance under this section for the Housing Assistance Council—

(1) $10,000,000 for fiscal year 2008; and

(2) $15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

□ 1415

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1980, the Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007.

I introduced H.R. 1980 earlier this year. It was referred to the Committee on Financial Services. Chairwoman WATERS held a hearing on it in her Housing Subcommittee, and the committee reported it favorably to the floor to the point where we are today.

At this point I will enter into the RECORD a letter from 266 organizations in support of the Housing Assistance Council, also known as HAC.

APRIL 16, 2007.

Hon. DAVID R. OBEY,
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN W. OLVER,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD, and Related Agencies, House Appropriations Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. JERRY LEWIS,
Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOE KNOLLENBERG,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Transportation, HUD, and Related Agencies, House Appropriations Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: We urge you to support congressional funding for the Housing Assistance Council (HAC), a national nonprofit intermediary organization, which has been committed for more than 35 years to supporting the development of affordable housing in the nation's most rural and underserved places. HAC has an excellent record as a lender, capacity builder, and information provider and should be included in the 2008 Department of Housing and Urban Development appropriation.

We, the undersigned 266 organizations, represent vibrant, rural communities across America. Our efforts to build and sustain affordable housing for low-income rural residents are often complicated by funding cuts and capacity challenges. Throughout, HAC has been a staunch advocate, a lender, a source of information and technical advice, and a friend to rural housing providers. At times, when others have ignored rural America's needs, HAC has stood firm and kept rural issues at the forefront of the national discourse.

Congressional funding allows HAC to support rural communities and provide:

Lending. HAC has loaned more than $217 million dollars to 1,875 organizations to develop 56,000 units of affordable housing. These loans have helped thousands of families own or rent affordable, decent homes in 49 states and the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

Capacity Building Grants, Technical Assistance, and Training. HAC has raised and distributed more than $5 million in capacity building grants to nurture over 300 local nonprofit organizations engaged in affordable housing development. Grants, supported by technical assistance and training have a ripple effect, enabling recipient organizations to begin to sustain themselves and better serve their communities.

Research and Information. The HAC website, ruralhome.org, helps to overcome the geographical isolation that impacts many rural communities and brings up-to-date information and technical resources to often disconnected rural communities. Taking Stock and other HAC research provide objective analysis of rural housing and poverty conditions that impact more than 55 million rural residents.

With continued congressional support, HAC can sustain and expand its exceptional work in the rural communities you represent across America.

Thank you for your consideration.

Alabama: Alabama Non Profit Housing Inc., Oneonta; Ecumenical Ministries, Fairhope; Habitat for Humanity Hale County, Inc., Greensboro; HERO, Greenboro; North Glover CDC, Mobile; SE Alabama Self-Help Association, Inc., Tuskegee; Sowing Seeds of Hope, Marion.

Alaska: Alaska CDC, Palmer; RurAL CAP, Anchorage.

Arizona: Comm. Action Human Resources Agency, Eloy; Emanika Associates Architects, Inc., Florence.

Arkansas: CHICOT Housing Assistance Corp., Lake Village; Crawford-Sebastian Comm. Dev. Council, Fort Smith; Delta Studies Center, State Univ.; East AR Strategic Planning Initiative, Brinkley; Eldorado Housing Authority, El Dorado; SACD, Arkadelphia; St. Francis County CDC, Forrest City; Universal Housing Development Corp., Russellsville.

California: Cabrillo Economic Dev. Corp., Ventura; California Coalition for Rural Housing, Sacramento; California Housing Partnership Corp, San Francisco; California Human Dev. Corp., W. Sacramento; Center for Community Advocacy, Salinas; Comm. Hsng. Improvement Program, Chico; CHISPA, Salinas; Legal Services of Northern California, Chico; Mercy Housing, W. Sacramento; Organizacion en California de Lideres Campesinas, Pomona; National Housing Law Project, Oakland; Peoples' Self-Help Housing Corporation, San Luis Obispo; Rural California Housing Corporation, W. Sacramento; Rural Community Assistance Corp., W. Sacramento; Self Help Enterprises Inc., Visalia; Self-Help Home Improvement Project, Redding; Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian Nation, Thermal.

Colorado: Century 21 Real Estate, Pagosa Springs; Colorado Housing, Inc., Pagosa Springs; Grand County Housing Authority, Fraser; Habitat for Humanity of Colorado, Denver; Habitat for Humanity of Montrose Cty, Montrose; Housing Justice, Denver; Housing Resources of Western Colorado, Grand Junction.

Delaware: Delmarva Rural Ministries, Inc., Dover; NCALL Research Inc, Dover.

Florida: Coalition of Florida Farmworker Orgs., Florida City; Florida Home Partnership, Inc., Ruskin; Florida Low Income Housing Associates, Inverness; Florida Non-Profit Housing, Inc., Sebring; Homes in Partnership, Inc., Apopka; Indiantown Non-Profit Housing, Indiantown; Rural Neighborhoods, Homestead.

Georgia: East Athens Development Corp, Athens; GA State Trade Assn. of Nonprofit Developers, Atlanta; Home Development Resources, Inc., Gainesville; Hsng and Econ. Leadership Partners, Inc., Athens; Ropheka Rock of the Word, Inc., Atlanta; Sams Memorial Community Econ. Dev., Darien; Seminole County Training School CDC, Donalsonville; Southwest Georgia HDC, Cuthbert; Washington Clay CDC, Atlanta.

Hawaii: Hawaii Human Dev. Corp., Honolulu; Self-Help Housing Corp. of Hawaii, Honolulu.

Idaho: Community Council of Idaho, Caldwell.

Illinois: Franciscan Ministries, Inc., Wheaton; Housing Action Illinois, Chicago; Illinois Migrant Council, Chicago; YouthBuild McLean County, Bloomington.

Indiana: Community Action of East Central IN, Richmond; Comm. Action Program of Evansville, Evansville; Heart House, Aurora.

Iowa: Northeast Iowa CAC, Decorah.

Kansas: 21st Century Homestead, Altamont; Emporia Comm. Hsng Org., (ECHO), Emporia; Interfaith Housing Services, Inc., Hutchinson; Mental Health Assoc. of the Heartland City, Kansas City; NEK–CAP, Hiawatha; New Beginnings, Inc., Hutchinson; Northwest Kansas Housing, Inc., Hill City; See-Kan Cooperative Development, Inc., Sedan.

Kentucky: Community Housing, Inc., Winchester; FAHE, Berea; Frontier Housing, Morehead; Housing Development Alliance, Hazard; Kentucky Housing Corporation, Frankfort; Kentucky Mnt Hs Dev' Corporation, Manchester; Low Income Hsng Coalition of E. KY, Prestonsburg; McCreary Cty Comm. Hsng Dev. Corp., Whitley City; Owsley County Action Team, Booneville; Partnership Housing, Inc, Booneville.

Louisiana: United for Fair Economy, Mandeville; Greater North Louisiana CDC, Jonesboro; MET—La. Housing, Hammond; Mt. Olive Waterworks District, Grambling; Project 2000, Inc., Hammond.

Maine: Bread of Life Ministries, Augusta; Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Wicasset; Community Concepts, South Paris; Rumford Group Homes, Inc., Rumford.

Maryland: Interfaith Housing Alliance, Inc, Frederick; Southern MD Tri-County CAC, Inc., Hughesville.

Massachusetts: Hilltown CDC, Chesterfield; RCAP Solutions, Gardner; Rural Development Incorporated, Turners Falls.

Michigan: Bay Area Housing, Inc, Bay City; Channel Housing Ministries, Inc., Hart; G.A. Haan L.P., Harbor Springs; Human Development Commission, Caro; Jackson Affordable Housing Corp., Jackson; Marquette County Habitat for Humanity, Marquette; NW Michigan Human Services Agency, Traverse; Northern Homes CDC, Boyne City; Saginaw County CAC, Saginaw; Washtenaw Affordable Housing Corp., Ann Arbor.

Minnesota: American Indians in Unity, Saint Paul; Becker County Housing, Fergus Falls; Grand Portage Indian Housing Authority, Grand Portage; Minnesota Housing Partnership, Saint Paul.

Mississippi: African American Cultural Society, Starkville; Central Mississippi, Inc. (CMI), Winona; Christian Housing Dev. Org., Inc., Columbus; City of Picayune, Picayune; Delta Foundation, Inc., Greenville; Esther Stewart Buford Foundation, Yazoo City; Southwest Mississippi Opportunity, Inc., McComb; West Holmes Community Dev. Org., Tchula.

Missouri: Economic Security Corp. of SW Area, Joplin; Green Hills Community Action Agency, Trenton; Missouri Valley CAA, Marshall.

Montana: Midwest Assistance Program, Lewistown; N. Cheyenne Housing Improvement Prog., Lame Deer; Neighborhood Housing Services, Great Falls.

Nevada: Rural Community Assistance Corp., Dayton.

New Hampshire: Laconia Area Community Land Trust, Laconia; NeighborWorks Greater Manchester, Manchester.

New Jersey: Crusaders CDC, Bridgeton; Mendham Area Senior Housing Corp., Mendham.

New Mexico: Centro Fuerza Y Unidad, Mesquite; City of Lordsburg, Lordsburg; Eastern Plains Housing Dev. Corp., Clovis; Greater Hidalgo Area Chamber of Comm., Lordsburg; Habitat for Humanity—Gila Region, Silver City; HELP-New Mexico, Inc, Albuquerque; Hsng Authority of the City of Las Cruces, Las Cruces; Navajo Partnership for Housing, Inc., Gallup; Santo Domingo Tribe, Santo Domingo, Pueblo; Siete del Norte, Embudo; SW Neighborhood Housing Services, Albuquerque; Supportive Housing Coalition of NM, Albuquerque; Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation, San Miguel.

New York: ADD Community Services Programs, Inc., Wappingers Falls; Bishop Sheen Ecumenical Hsng Fdn, Inc., Rochester; Cuba CDC, Cuba; Hudson Valley Housing Development Finance Corp., Wappingers Falls; NYS Rural Advocates, Blue Mntn Lake; NYS Rural Housing Coalition, Albany; Rural Development Leadership Network, Prince St. Stn; Rural Opportunities, Inc., Rochester.

North Carolina: Design Corps, Raleigh; Habitat for Humanity of Moore County, Aberdeen; Herrington Village, Ltd., Elizabeth City; Hinton Rural Life Center, Hayesville; Housing Assistance Corporation, Hendersonville; Inez Community Development Co., Greensboro; Lincoln Apartments, Inc., Durham; Moore County Habitat for Humanity, Aberdeen; Mount Sinai Homes, Fayetteville; Mountain Projects Inc., Waynesville; North Carolina Housing Coalition, Raleigh; Panola Heights Housing Dev. Corp., Tarboro; Princeville Housing Development Corp., Princeville; Robeson County CDC, Rowland; Southern Real Estate Mgmt & Cons., Durham; Telamon Corporation, Rowland, Rowland.

North Dakota: Southeastern North Dakota CAA, Fargo; Spirit Lake CDC, Saint Michael; Standing Rock Housing Authority, Fort Yates.

Ohio: Adams Brown Counties. Econ. Op. Inc., Winchester; COHHIO, Columbus; Habitat for Humanity of Morrow Cty, Mt. Gilead; Rural Appalachian Housing Dev., Glouster.

Oklahoma: Latimer County Housing Authority, Stigler; Native American Housing Services, Inc., McLoud; Tri-County Indian Nations CDC, Ada.

Oregon: CASA of Oregon, Newberg; Junction City/Harrisburg/Monroe Habitat for Humanity, Junction City; LeBanon Area Habitat for Humanity, Lebanon; Rural Collaborative, Portland; Umpqua CDC, Roseburg.

Pennsylvania: Alliance for Better Housing, Kennett Square; Columbia County Housing Corporation, Bloomsburg; Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania, Glenside; Livable Hsng & Comm. Dev. Software, York; Sisters of St. Francis, Aston; Threshold Housing Development, Inc., Uniontown; Trehab, Montrose.

South Carolina: Allendale County ALIVE, Allendale; CDC of Marlboro County, Bennettsville; Lowcountry Hsng and Econ. Dev. Fdn, Charleston; United Methodist Relief Center, Mt. Pleasant.

South Dakota: Inter-Lakes Comm. Action Partnership, Watertown; Oti Kaga, Inc., Eagle Butte.

Tennessee: Affordable Housing Resources, Nashville; Buffalo Valley, Inc, Hohenwald; Carey Counseling Center, Paris; Crossville Housing Authority, Crossville; Eastern Eight CDC, Johnson City; Foothills CDC, Alcoa; Hawkins Habitat for Humanity, Rogersville; Joshua & Nehemiah Comm. Ministry, Jackson; Riverview Kansas CDC, Memphis.

Texas: Action Gypsum, LP, Houston; Amigos del Valle, Mission; Association of Rural Comm. in Texas, Austin; Comm. Council of Southwest Texas, Uvalde; CDC of South Texas, Inc., McAllen; Futuro Communities, Uvalde; Housing Plus, Inc., Harlingen; Lower Valley Housing Corp., Fabens; McAllen Affordable Homes, McAllen; Motivation, Education and Training, Inc., Austin; Organizacion Progresiva de San Elizario, San Elizario; Paso del Norte Civil Rights Project, El Paso; Proyecto Azteca, San Juan; Self-Help Housing of East Texas, Newton; South Texas Civil Rights Project, San Juan; Texas C-BAR, Austin; Urban County Program, College Station; Walker-Montgomery CHDO, New Waverly.

Utah: Mountain Lands Comm. Housing Trust, Park City; Neighborhood Nonprofit Housing Corp., Logan; Rural Housing Dev. Corp. of Utah County, Provo.

Vermont: Brattleboro Area Comm. Land Trust, Battleboro; Lamoille Housing Partnership, Inc., Morrisville; RNA Community Builders, Rutland; Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition, Burlington; Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, Montpelier.

Virginia: Bay Aging, Urbanna; Blue Ridge Housing Development Corp., Roanoke; Community Housing Partners Corp., Christiansburg; HOPE Community Services, Farmville; Mountain Shelter, Wytheville; Rappahannock Tribe, Inc., Indian Neck; Southeast RCAP, Roanoke; Trailview Development, Abingdon; Volunteers of America, Alexandria.

Washington: Diocese of Yakima Housing, Yakima; Homes for Islanders, Friday Harbor; Kitsap County Consolidated Hsng Auth., Silverdale; Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing, Yakima; Okanogan County CAC, Okanogan; Shelter Resources, Inc., Bellevue; WA State Farmworker Housing Trust, Bellingham; WA State Housing Finance Commission, Seattle, Whatcom Skagit Housing, Bellingham.

West Virginia: Comm. Homebuyer Investment Program, Wheeling; Harts Community Development Inc., Harts; Housing Authority of Mingo County, Williamson; Stop Abusive Family Environments, Welch; Telamon Corporation, Martinsburg; Woodlands Development Group, Elkins.

Wisconsin: America's Dream, Inc., Seymour; Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, Madison; Southeast Wisconsin Housing Corporation, Burlington; UMOS, Milwaukee.

Wyoming: Habitat for Humanity of the Greater Teton Area, Jackson.

Madam Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank my good friend Congresswoman WATERS for working closely with me as she helped navigate this important rural housing legislation to this floor. I also want to recognize the important role her staff played in bringing this bill to the floor today. I commend Mikael Moore and Nat Thomas with Chairwoman WATERS, as well as Jeff Riley with Congressman FRANK for their time and efforts and patience and understanding while working on this important legislation. I also want to acknowledge the good work of Jaime Lizarraga.

In my capacity as chairman of the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus, I introduced H.R. 1980, the Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007, that supports rural communities' efforts to provide quality and affordable housing. It authorizes the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide the Housing Assistance Council, known as HAC, with funds for technical assistance, for training, as well as support and advice. These types of assistance will help develop the business and administrative capacities of rural community-based housing development organizations. Also, this bill will provide the Housing Assistance Council with funds to use to make loans, grants, or provide other financial assistance for community-based housing development organizations, which will help them develop affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income families throughout rural America.

HAC will use some of these funds received as a result of this authorizing language and the appropriations process for below-market lending to local community and faith-based home builders with an emphasis on first-time low-income homeownership, particularly for minorities. When repaid, HAC will lend the funds again to new borrowers. The new capital will be used throughout rural America, including in five very high need areas: Appalachia, the Lower Mississippi Delta and Southeast, the Southwest border region, Native American areas, and migrant farm worker regions throughout the country. These are areas where property rates and housing need are very high, development capacity is very low, and conventional financing tools do not always work.

The Housing Assistance Council has extensive experience and is uniquely qualified to carry out this work. HAC's 35-year-old nonprofit loan fund, where this new capital would be used, has lent over $220 million during their existence to nearly 1,900 organizations to develop almost 60,000 homes, and the fund has a loss rate of less than 1 percent. Madam Speaker, these loans have helped thousands of families own or rent affordable, decent homes in 49 States and the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, and has helped Proyecto Azteca in my congressional district. It is important to note that HAC is the only national assistance organization devoted solely to rural housing and community development.

Madam Speaker, 20 percent of our Nation's population lives in rural communities; yet far too many of these families live in conditions that are poor, inadequate, or run-down. This bill will go a long way towards improving the overall quality of life of rural Americans by providing them with the resources they need to improve the quality of housing in rural America.

In conclusion, I want to thank again Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS and Chairman BARNEY FRANK for their support for this important legislation and for bringing this bill to the floor for a vote today.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise today to support H.R. 1980, the Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007, and would like to compliment the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for his work on this and also Chairwoman WATERS for bringing this important initiative for rural communities to the floor today.

This legislation recognizes the work of the Housing Assistance Council in providing housing opportunities for low-income families in rural communities, and most of the Second District is rural communities in New Mexico. There are many others across this country, but we feel the direct impact in New Mexico.

Although HAC has received funding through HUD appropriations since the early 1980s, the program has never been authorized. This bill would formally authorize assistance councils, which is important to ensure the continued success of the program and long-term goal of aiding individuals in low-income housing.

The Housing Assistance Council is unique in nature and the only nonprofit designed to help improve rural housing. HAC should be particularly praised for its work on self-help housing initiatives, which promote personal stability and financial responsibility for low-income housing.

Again I want to thank my colleagues for acknowledging the Housing Assistance Council's important contribution to affordable housing for rural communities, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I want to yield 5 minutes to my good friend the gentleman from New Hampshire, Congressman PAUL HODES, who has already made a mark in Congress during his first year in office.

Mr. HODES. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1980.

Rural poverty is a particularly harsh brand of indigence. It tends to be more extreme than urban poverty, and because it develops in areas far from television cameras and daily newspapers, to most people in this country, rural poverty is faceless. But its presence and its consequences are very real, and they present formidable challenges to both our country and our conscience.

In my own home State of New Hampshire, we have largely a rural State. Our cities by some measures are hardly cities. They are large towns. And while we are known for the beauty of our mountains and our lakes and our tourist economy as well as our high tech economy, there are pockets of intransigent rural poverty throughout our State. In the far north the rate of poverty is much higher than it is in most other places in the State, and generally the poverty rate in rural areas of the country is 14.6 percent, which tops that of most urban areas.

People who are living in rural poverty face numerous challenges. Inaccessibility of housing with high rents. In New Hampshire the average price for an apartment for a family of four is now $1,000, and this is at a time when folks who are living in rural areas are facing a softer economy and gas prices which are rising, and the challenge of finding a decent place to live for people who live in rural areas is a powerful challenge. People who live in rural areas are farther from basic services. They are less likely to take advantage of them.

There is a desperate need in parts of our country, including my own State. And as the people's House, we have a moral imperative to help children and parents trapped in destitution.

H.R. 1980 and H.R. 1982, which will come to the floor later, are compassionate, responsible bills which encourage the development of low- and moderate-income housing in our most stricken areas. There is no doubt, because I have seen it with my own eyes on numerous occasions at home, that a clean, safe place to live is often the first step on the road to self-sufficiency. We are not talking about handouts. Encouraging economic development in poor areas helps creates jobs and a solid tax base, which build toward self-sustaining prosperity.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1980 and its companion 1982 are wise, compassionate investments in our country's future. I urge my colleagues to support their passage.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this important bill.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

This legislation is very important to many parts of Texas. As you know, when they redrew the lines of the Congressmen in Texas, I was given a 375-mile-long geographic area that had 90 communities. The greatest majority, 90 percent, were small rural communities who were asking when is Congress going to recognize the great need that we have for housing assistance?

And I want to give you just one example of the route that I mentioned, Proyecto Azteca, which is one where people build their own homes. They provide the labor to build those homes with the supervision of some professional supervisors in construction of residential homes. The only assistance that we give them is the purchasing of the materials, the building materials, which amounts to about $30,000. And I wish you could see these homes. I wish you could see the fine work that is done in these three-bedroom, one-bath homes that many have been built in our area with this type of assistance.

So I give this example because there are many serving in Congress who have never visited colonias like those that are in some parts of the southwestern part of the United States.

So I say that this type of legislation is something that is going to go a long ways in helping provide many, many more affordable homes.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1980, the Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007.

This bill authorizes $10 million for the Housing Assistance Council, HAC, in Fiscal Year 2008 and $15 million in Fiscal Years 2009–2014. HAC, a nonprofit corporation, is the only national intermediary focused solely on the tremendous affordable housing needs of rural areas and small towns.

HAC assists in the development of both single-family homes and multi-family housing, and promotes homeownership for working low-income rural families. HAC maintains a special focus on high-need groups and regions: Indian country, the Mississippi Delta, farm workers, the Southwest border colonias, and Appalachia. In just the past 8 years, HAC has provided over $105 million in aid to hundreds of organizations in 160 Congressional districts. Since inception in 1971, HAC has helped build 60,000 affordable homes in 49 states and 2 territories.

The funds authorized by H.R. 1980 will allow HAC to continue successfully assisting a national network of rural nonprofit, public and for profit builders. Specifically, HAC could continue providing grants, loans, technical assistance, training, and other support to build the capacity of rural community-based housing development organizations to create and sustain safe affordable housing. The bill also enables HAC to offer vital help to specific housing projects and initiatives these groups undertake.

I am especially pleased that this funding will enable HAC to bring its expertise to bear on the problem of rural homelessness. While my District does not encompass rural areas, it does have as many as 10,000 persons on any given night. And though it may not seem so at first blush, homelessness in central Los Angeles is related to rural homelessness.

Specifically, in the absence of an adequately resourced network of housing and service providers in their home communities, poor rural folks who fall into homelessness often leave their family and social networks and move to larger urban areas in the hope of finding jobs, housing, and social services.

While migrating from the countryside to the city, and vice versa, is an important and time-honored American tradition, these vulnerable households—often with few skills and suffering from disabilities or chronic health problems—too often experience homelessness again in the destination city. There, they enter public and private systems of care already stressed to the breaking point—as tragically exemplified by a recent "60 Minutes" story on so-called "hospital patient-dumping" in Los Angeles.

H.R. 1980 will enable HAC to help interrupt this tragic cycle, by building the capacity of their network of housing developers and social service providers to care for the homeless and at-risk in their own hometowns—where they are most likely to escape homelessness and re-enter the economic mainstream.

Mr. HINOJOSA. 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 gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1980.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PEARCE. 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 motion will be postponed.

□ 1430

RURAL HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1982) to authorize appropriations for the rural housing and economic development program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1982

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 ''Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. RURAL HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

(a) USE.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may carry out a program, through the Office of Rural Housing and Economic Development, to provide assistance to Indian tribes, State housing finance agencies, State community or economic development agencies, local nonprofit organizations and community development corporations in rural areas to support innovative housing and economic development activities in rural areas.

(b) REQUIREMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER FOR ASSISTANCE.—As a condition of initial or continuing assistance under any housing or economic development activity that is provided assistance with amounts made available under this section, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall require that each member of a family so assisted (or of a family applying for such assistance) who is 18 years of age or older or is the spouse of the head of household of such family, shall have a valid social security number.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for assistance under this section—

(1) $30,000,000 for fiscal year 2008; and

(2) $40,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation, and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007.

I introduced H.R. 1982 earlier this year. It was referred to the Committee on Financial Services. Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS held a hearing on it in her Housing Subcommittee, and the committee reported it favorably to the floor to the point where we are today.

At this point, I would submit for the RECORD a statement of the National Association of Realtors in support of the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act.

STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS TO THE HOUSE FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY HEARING

RURAL HOUSING PROGRAMS: REVIEW FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET AND PENDING RURAL HOUSING LEGISLATION—MAY 9, 2007

Nearly 20% of the U.S. population live in non-metropolitan areas. Housing conditions in rural areas are generally worse than in urban or suburban neighborhoods. Federal rural housing programs are instrumental in providing affordable housing opportunities to low- and moderate income rural renters and homebuyers. The National Association of REALTORS® strongly supports federal housing programs that target rural communities and provide sufficient federal assistance needed to meet the housing needs of rural communities.

Many of our rural citizens face a serious housing crisis. Nearly all of the counties with the highest poverty rates in America are rural. As a result, access to an adequate supply of safe, affordable rental units, mortgage financing and housing assistance is especially important in these areas. Approximately 1.9 million rural renters have housing problems; the majority of these renters are spending more than 30% of their incomes for housing. These areas also generally have fewer mortgage lenders competing in the marketplace, a factor that raises the cost of home mortgages.

FY2008 budget proposals

The President's FY2008 budget proposal for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Housing Service (RHS) reflects a preference for loan guarantees and vouchers to provide low income rental housing. The President's budget proposal eliminates funding for the Section 502 single family direct loan program, while increasing funding for the Section 502 single family guaranteed loan program by 32%. Similarly, the proposal would eliminate funding for the Section 515 multifamily direct loan program (which provides loans to developers of affordable rental housing), while doubling funding for the Section 538 multifamily guaranteed program. Lastly, the budget proposes to increase from 2 to 3 percent, the guarantee fee on new 502 loans.

While NAR's members understand and support programs like loan guarantees that leverage available funds, we also believe that direct loan programs are also very important. In many rural communities, the Section 502 direct loan program is the only housing assistance available. Section 502 homeownership direct loan program loans are used primarily to help low income households purchase homes. They can be used to build, repair, renovate, or relocate homes, and to purchase and prepare sites, including providing water and sewage facilities. These loans may also be used to refinance debts when necessary to avoid foreclosure or when required to make necessary house repairs affordable. We strongly support the availability of sufficient federal assistance to ensure the Section 502 direct loan program responsibly addresses the housing needs of low and moderate income rural families.

Rental housing is also a critical need in rural communities. Approximately 7.8 million people in non-metropolitan areas in the U.S. are poor. Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Loans are direct, competitive mortgage loans made to finance affordable multifamily rental housing units for very low-, low-, and moderate-income families, elderly persons, and persons with disabilities. Since its inception in 1962, the Section 515 program has provided more than half a million decent rental homes affordable for the lowest income rural residents. We urge Congress to restore construction funding for the Section 515 program eliminated in the President's FY2008 budget so as to enable low-income rural families to find decent, safe, and affordable housing.

We also strongly oppose the proposed increase in the guarantee fee on 502 loans. Increasing the fee will mean that rural low- and moderate-income families will have to pay more for the opportunity to become homeowners. This may cause some families to become ineligible for a mortgage.

Pending rural housing legislation

The National Association of REALTORS® also supports H.R. 1982, the ''Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007'', introduced by Rep. Hinojosa (D–TX). This bill would authorize the Rural Housing and Economic Development program at HUD that provides assistance to states and localities for housing and economic development activities in rural communities. The program provides limited funding on a competitive basis to community groups including local rural non-profits, community development corporations, housing finance agencies (HFAs), and economic development agencies. The funding may be used for capacity building and similar support for housing and economic development projects in areas with a population of less than 20,000. This program has been operating successfully at HUD but has not been authorized. HR 1982 would simply authorize the program and deserves Congressional support.

Conclusion

In closing, the National Association of REALTORS® appreciates this opportunity to comment on the needs for rural housing. We thank the Subcommittee for its attention to rural housing, and we urge your strong support of our policy and funding recommendations to improve rural housing opportunities.

Madam Speaker, 20 percent of our Nation's population lives in rural communities, yet far too many of these families live in conditions that are poor, inadequate or run down. To address these horrendous conditions, I cofounded and currently chair the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus. The goal of the caucus is to improve the availability, affordability and quality of housing in rural America.

H.R. 1982 provides $30 million for the Rural Housing and Economic Development, known as the RHED, program respectively for fiscal year 2008, and $40 million for fiscal years 2008 throughout the year 2013.

I believe this legislation will go a long way towards accomplishing the goals of the Congressional Rural Housing Caucus.

The Rural Housing and Economic Development program provides for capacity building at the State and at the local level for rural housing and economic development, and to support innovative housing and economic development activities in rural areas.

Funds made available under this program are awarded competitively on an annual basis through a selection process conducted by HUD. This program is established to assist nonprofit organizations in rural communities across America. Eligible applicants are local rural nonprofits as well as community development corporations, federally recognized Indian tribes, State housing finance agencies, and State community and/or economic development agencies.

Support for innovative housing and economic development activities is intended for, but not limited to, other costs for innovative housing and economic development activities.

Possible activities include the following: Preparation of plans; architectural drawings; acquisitions of land and buildings; demolition; provision of infrastructure; purchase of materials and construction costs; use of local labor markets; job training and counseling for beneficiaries; and financial services such as revolving loan funds and IDAs, which are the individual development accounts.

Other possible activities include home ownership and financial counseling, the latter of which is important to me in my role as the cofounder and cochair of the Financial and Economic Literacy Caucus with my friend Congresswoman BIGGERT.

The RHED program also allows for application of innovative construction methods, provision of financial assistance to homeowners, businesses and developers, and the establishment of CDFIs, lines of credit, revolving loan funds, microenterprises, and something that is much needed in my own district, small business incubators.

The Rural Housing and Economic Development Enhancement Act of 2007 will help the RHED program provide additional funding needed to increase and improve capacity, building at the State and local level for rural housing and economic development.

I urge my colleagues to vote for the bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007. RHED is designed to provide grants to Indian tribes, State housing finance agencies, State community or economic development agencies, local nonprofit organizations and community development corporations.

H.R. 1982 was introduced in response to the administration's budget proposals for the fiscal year 2008, which zeros out the RHED program by consolidating it into the Community Development Block Grant program, CDBG.

This shows a continuing promise by the administration to more effectively manage its grant programs. However, preserving the one remaining outreach in HUD to rural communities is critical in helping our most impoverished citizens.

The Second District of New Mexico, which I represent, is one of America's most rural districts, and it is critical that Congress provide our rural citizens with the proper access to safe, affordable housing. For example, in the town of Columbus, New Mexico, near the Mexican border, there are citizens who have no running water in their homes. They must bring a pail to the center of town in order to get water for their families. Many times these individuals are overlooked because of geography, and we must protect their rights.

I would like to thank Congressman HINOJOSA for recognizing the need for safe housing in rural communities like those in southern New Mexico. The need for this kind of program is great in the Second District, and I am grateful to assist in seeing that Congress is coming to the aid of the neediest families in rural areas. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, at this time, I wish to yield 5 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from New Hampshire, Congressman PAUL HODES.

Congressman HODES has helped focus Congress' attention on rural housing issues and environmentally green, sustainable building practices. And he has earned the respect of those of us on that committee.

Mr. HODES. I thank the gentleman for yielding on this important bill.

Madam Speaker, I had the privilege to speak briefly on H.R. 1980. In many ways, H.R. 1982 is a companion measure.

This important act authorizes the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, through the Office of Rural Housing and Economic Development, to implement important assistance programs to support innovative housing and economic development activities in rural areas. Both in my State of New Hampshire and in States around the country, this important act will provide much needed assistance.

I rise in strong support of this act. I urge my colleagues to unanimously approve of this measure.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007. This bill authorizes $30 million for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's, HUD, Rural Housing and Economic Development, RHED, program in FY 2008 and $40 million for Fiscal Years 2009–2013.

Although Congress has funded RHED since 1999, this bill finally gives the program formal authorization. Such authorization is long overdue, as this competitive grant program has long-since proven its worthiness. According to the Office of Management and Budget, RHED grants have created more than 9,100 jobs and more than 112,000 housing units.

RHED grants are desperately needed to address the growing affordable housing crisis in rural America. While housing costs are lower in rural America, so too are household incomes. As a result, rural America faces a growing affordability concern, particularly among renters. According to the 2005 American Housing Survey, nearly 3.6 million rural households are cost burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their monthly income for housing costs. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's biennial "worst case housing needs" survey reveals that, in 2005, nearly 1 million rural households paid more than half their incomes in housing costs and/or lived in substandard housing—a dramatic 51 percent increase since 2003.

RHED funding is prudently allocated—based on community need measured by poverty and unemployment rates, as well as by other indicators including rates of substandard housing and percentage of households facing affordability problems.

The RHED program also emphasizes specific high needs regions and populations. Over 60 percent of the organizations that have received RHED funds over the program's history serve high needs regions, which include Appalachia, the Mississippi Delta, the Border Colonias, Native American lands, and farmworkers.

The RHED program also targets smallest, most isolated rural communities, giving extra weight to applications proposing to serve areas with populations of 2,500 or less. Because of this targeting, the Housing Assistance Council estimates that almost one-third of RHED grants have been allocated to organizations serving the most remote rural counties.

RHED is an especially important housing resource for rural America because of its exclusive focus on rural communities—a unique niche among HUD programs, and one that helps redress the challenges rural communities face in obtaining funding in many other federal housing programs. For example, only 12 percent of section 8 funds go to non-metropolitan areas and the HOME program has no set-aide for rural communities, with the result that they receive a disproportionately small portion of formula grants. Less than 7 percent of FHA assistance goes to non-metropolitan areas. On a per-capita basis, rural counties fare worse with FHA, getting only $25 per capita versus $264 per capita in metro areas. Only about 10 percent of Veterans Affairs housing programs reach non-metropolitan areas and per capita spending in rural counties is only one-third that of metropolitan areas.

RHED fills such critical gaps left by other Federal housing and community development programs. Its flexible design supports comprehensive community development efforts that address the interconnected housing and economic development needs of rural communities. This targeted resource has enabled rural community organizations across the country to design and implement innovative programs and stabilize their communities. The ongoing need for the RHED programs is clear and I encourage my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman FRANK and my friend Congressman HINOJOSA for bringing forth this important legislation and making it a priority for the American people.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1982, the Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007, a bill that would implement an assistance program to support economic and housing development in rural areas. This act would provide assistance to Indian tribes, State housing finance agencies, State community or development agencies, local nonprofit organizations and community development corporations.

According to the Texas Low Income Housing Information Service, in Texas alone, more than one million people have lived in public housing over the past 60 years. In Texas and throughout the country, the majority of families living in public housing have very low income and have no alternative to public housing.

My Congressional District is very rural, and housing in these very low-income communities remains a top concern. This act would allow sustainable low income housing and improve the economic standard of our working-class families in Texas.

I ask all my colleagues to join me in supporting those in need of assistance by voting for this bill.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, In 2006, the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska, in Niobrara, received a Rural Housing and Economic Development Innovative Support Grant award, to provide additional funding for a 40–unit subdivision in the Village of Santee.

Today, we will pass H.R. 1982, authorizing the Office of Housing and Urban Development to authorize the Rural Housing and Economic Development program to provide competitive grants to support housing and economic development in rural areas.

This program is the only exclusively rural housing program administered by HUD, and focuses on "high-risk" areas.

If rural areas of Nebraska are going to grow and prosper, we need strong, safe communities. H.R. 1982 is an investment in the future for struggling rural areas, and is a good step in the right direction.

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, 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. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1982, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PEARCE. 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 motion will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING THE CATHEDRAL SQUARE CORPORATION ON ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 408) recognizing and honoring the Cathedral Square Corporation on its 30th anniversary.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 408

Whereas in 1977 the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, recognized the need to provide safe and affordable housing for its low-income seniors, organized the Cathedral Square Corporation, and began construction of a single project;

Whereas since that small beginning Cathedral Square Corporation has grown into one of the largest and most innovative nonprofit housing developers in Vermont;

Whereas the work of Cathedral Square Corporation has been groundbreaking, both literally and figuratively;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation has developed housing for persons with mental health challenges, and operates the housing in partnership with mental health agencies;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation has developed housing for younger adults with severe mobility impairments, and operates the housing in partnership with the Visiting Nurse Association;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation completed one of the first assisted living conversion projects in the country for very low-income seniors who otherwise would be in nursing homes;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation saved the historic Ruggles House, a property on the National Register of Historic Places, converting it to shared housing;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation developed an intergenerational community, serving the elderly, teenage parents, and parents returning to college;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation created Whitcomb Terrace, a housing development for persons of any age, income, or disability, which is a truly integrated, barrier-free community;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation recently completed construction of an innovative mixed-financing project, which is one of few such projects in the Nation and will be home to 63 senior households and 4 nonprofit organizations;

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation currently manages housing for 837 seniors, 79 young adults with special needs, and 24 low-income children, and every property managed by the Corporation provides as many services as possible to enable independent living by the residents;

Whereas not only has Cathedral Square Corporation made possible 40 affordable housing communities throughout Vermont, but the Board of Directors and staff of the Corporation are always looking to the future, anticipating the housing and service needs of those Vermonters who otherwise would have few housing options; and

Whereas Cathedral Square Corporation does not just build housing, they provide homes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes and honors the tremendous accomplishments and dedication of Cathedral Square Corporation, a Vermont nonprofit housing development organization, on the occasion of its 30th anniversary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Hampshire?

There was no objection.

Mr. HODES. Madam Speaker, I yield myself so much time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of House Resolution 408. This resolution recognizes and honors the Cathedral Square Corporation on its 30th anniversary in September of this year.

The Cathedral Square Corporation is based in Burlington, Vermont, in the district of my esteemed colleague, PETER WELCH.

In 1977, the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, the Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, recognized the need to provide safe and affordable housing for its low-income seniors. It organized the Cathedral Square Corporation and began construction of a single project. Since then, it has grown into one of the largest and most innovative nonprofit housing developers in Vermont.

The Cathedral Square Corporation has developed much needed housing for persons with mental health challenges, younger adults with severe mobility impairments, and completed one of the first assisted living conversion projects in the country for very low-income seniors who otherwise would be in nursing homes. In addition, the Cathedral Square Corporation has worked with the community to save the historic Ruggles House, a property on the National Register of Historic Places, converting it to shared housing.

This extremely important organization has worked to develop an intergenerational community, serving the elderly, teenage parents, and parents returning to college.

In total, Madam Speaker, the Cathedral Square Corporation currently manages housing for 837 seniors, 79 young adults with special needs, and 24 low-income children. And every property managed by the corporation provides as many services as possible to enable independent living by the residents.

Madam Speaker, not only has Cathedral Square Corporation made possible 40 affordable housing communities throughout Vermont, but the board of directors and staff of this corporation are always looking to the future, anticipating the housing and service needs of those Vermonters who otherwise would have few housing options.

The Cathedral Square Corporation doesn't just build housing, they provide homes and help create community. They are an outstanding example to all housing groups, and I applaud their innovation and their diligent work and service to the community.

I congratulate the Cathedral Square Corporation. And this resolution congratulates them on 30 years of distinguished service.

Madam Speaker, at this time I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 408 to honor Cathedral Square Corporation in respect to their 30 years of dedicated service to providing quality, affordable housing for seniors and individuals with special needs.

The United States must take care of its seniors and individual needs. I appreciate the work done by the Cathedral Square Corporation over the last 30 years to provide the most quality assistance to our seniors and special need individuals.

I thank and congratulate the CSC on reaching their 30th anniversary. And I encourage my colleagues to support the resolution.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HODES. I thank the gentleman for his concurrence in this resolution.

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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 gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. HODES) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 408.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF A WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD CRASH VICTIMS

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 87) supporting the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 87

Whereas 40,000 people in the United States, and 1,200,000 people globally, die in road crashes each year;

Whereas another 20,000,000 to 50,000,000 people globally are injured each year as a result of speeding motor vehicles, the increasing use of motor vehicles, and rapid urbanization;

Whereas the World Health Organization has predicted that by the year 2020 the annual number of deaths from motor vehicle crashes is likely to surpass the annual number of deaths from AIDS;

Whereas the current estimated cost of motor vehicle crashes worldwide is $518,000,000,000 annually, representing between 3 and 5 percent of the gross domestic product of each nation;

Whereas over 90 percent of motorist-related deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries;

Whereas according to the World Health Organization motorist-related deaths and costs continue to rise in these countries due to a lack of appropriate road engineering and injury prevention programs in public health sectors; and

Whereas the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution designating the third Sunday of November as a day of remembrance for road crash victims and their families, and called on nations globally to improve road safety: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims; and

(2) encourages the people of the United States to support and participate in programs and activities to commemorate a world day of remembrance for road crash victims with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I might consume.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in the consideration of H. Con. Res. 87, a bill that supports the goals and ideas for a world day of remembrance for road crash victims. H. Con. Res. 87, which has 54 cosponsors, was introduced by Representative ROBERT WEXLER on March 8, 2007. H. Con. Res. 87 was reported from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on June 12, 2007 by a voice vote.

The third Sunday in November is designated as a world day of remembrance for road crash victims. This resolution commemorates the 1.2 million people killed in road crashes globally, including 40,000 in the United States each year.

Road crashes are the second leading cause of death worldwide among young people from ages 5 to 29, and the third leading cause of death among people aged 30 to 44 years. Vehicle accidents every year have injured and disabled as many as 50 million people throughout the world. Road traffic injuries cost countries approximately $518 billion each year, which is between 1 and 5 percent of the gross domestic product of each nation.

I support this legislation to encourage the people of the United States and of the world to support and participate in programs and activities to commemorate a world day of remembrance for road crash victims with appropriate ceremonies, programs and other activities.

Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague, ROBERT WEXLER, for introducing this legislation and urge swift passage of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, every year approximately 40,000 people in the United States die in road crashes. The number worldwide is even more devastating, over 1.2 million. These tragedies are overwhelming to the victims and their families and lead to numerous unintended physical, emotional and financial hardships.

H. Con. Res. 87 supports a world day of remembrance for road crash victims on the third Saturday of every November. According to the World Health Organization, 90 percent of motorist-related deaths occur in low and middle income countries. The countries are in need of improved road systems, increased prevention initiatives, and education programs for new drivers.

Too many of these road crash fatalities can be prevented through legislation, consistent enforcement and better education on the use of safety precautions such as seatbelts, child restraints and helmets. Drunk driving prevention programs and campaigns such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving are useful tools to bring awareness to such tragedies.

Communities and families worldwide must work together to prevent road crashes and related deaths. These traffic accidents injure or disable more than 50 million people. It is time we take these numbers into perspective to end dangerous and life-threatening vehicle crashes.

With that, I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 87.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, today, we will pass H. Con. Res. 87, supporting the goals and ideals of a world day or remembrance for road crash victims.

This legislation sets aside the third Sunday of November as a day of remembrance for road crash victims and their families, and calls on nations globally to improve road safety.

It also encourages our country to support and participate in programs and activities to commemorate a world day of remembrance for road crash victims with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and other activities.

Each year 40,000 people in the U.S. die in road crashes—last year Nebraska had 226 fatal crashes, according to the Nebraska Office of Highway Safety.

Very few of us can say we have never been affected by a road crash. It is my hope, through these educational and informative steps, we can lower the total of Americans—and Nebraskans—lost to road crashes each year.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I would urge passage of this legislation, and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 87.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DR. KARL E. CARSON POST OFFICE BUILDING

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2570) to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Boardwalk Drive in Fort Collins, Colorado, as the ''Dr. Karl E. Carson Post Office Building''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2570

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. DR. KARL E. CARSON POST OFFICE BUILDING.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Boardwalk Drive in Fort Collins, Colorado, shall be known and designated as the ''Dr. Karl E. Carson 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 ''Dr. Karl E. Carson Post Office Building''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentleman from Utah (Mr. CANNON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am pleased to join my colleague in the consideration of H.R. 2570, which names a postal facility in Fort Collins, Colorado, after Dr. Karl E. Carson. H.R. 2570, which was introduced by Representative MARILYN MUSGRAVE on June 5, 2007, was reported from the Oversight Committee on June 12, 2007, by a voice vote. This measure has the support of the entire Colorado congressional delegation.

Dr. Karl E. Carson served in the U.S. Navy Reserve during World War II. He was a communications officer on the USS Strive, a minesweeper. Following his military service, he attended the University of Nebraska and received his doctor of dental surgery degree in 1951. Dr. Carson started his dental practice in 1954. His practice thrived and continued until his retirement in 1994.

In 1991, the Colorado Dental Association gave him its Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Carson was a member of the Fort Carson City Council from 1975 until 1973. He held the city's top post, mayor, for 5 years, from 1968 to 1973.

Madam Speaker, I commend my colleague, Representative MARILYN MUSGRAVE, for introducing this legislation and urge the swift passage of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, Dr. Karl Carson, a father, musician and public servant, led an honorable life of community service. Over the years the tremendous contributions he made to the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, certainly merit the naming of a post office in his honor.

Dr. Karl Carson was born in 1915 in Wichita, Kansas. He was raised on a dairy farm and milked cows each day before leaving for school. While in high school, he met his wife Wilma Schull, with whom he had five children. Dr. Carson demonstrated a deep devotion to his family as a loving husband, father and grandfather.

He attended Fort Collins State University in Kansas on a music scholarship and paid for his education by singing at weddings and other social occasions.

After graduating, he served honorably in the U.S. Navy Reserve during World War II as a communications officer aboard the USS *Strive*. This service marked the beginning of a lifetime of serving his community and country.

After the conclusion of his military service, Dr. Carson received a doctorate degree in dental surgery from the University of Nebraska. In 1954, he moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, with his family and established his own dental practice. Dr. Carson enjoyed a successful 43-year long dental career. He was recognized for his excellence in dentistry by the Colorado Dental Association in 1991 with a Distinguished Service Award.

In 1965, Dr. Carson began his noteworthy career of public service as a member of the Fort Collins City Council. He was subsequently elected by the City Council to be mayor in 1968.

During his mayoral term, he initiated a program called Designing Tomorrow Today, which was the catalyst for building the downtown library, city hall and the Lincoln Center. Dr. Carson also regarded his support of adding fluoride to Fort Collins water supply as one of his greatest achievements.

Dr. Carson will be remembered for his legendary record of community service. Beyond serving as the director of downtown Fort Collins development, the Colorado League of Cities and President of the Colorado Municipal League, he was a member of the Kiwanis Club for over 60 years.

Regarded by many of the fathers of Fort Collins, Dr. Karl Carson undoubtedly left his mark on the Colorado community. Let us recognize his legacy of community service and devotion to family by naming this post office in his honor.

Madam Speaker, I urge the passage of H.R. 2570.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE).

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of H.R. 2570, to designate the post office building at 301 Boardwalk Drive in Fort Collins, Colorado, as the Dr. Karl E. Carson Post Office Building.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to honor a man who has given so much to the Fort Collins community. He was quoted in 2005 saying that he lived life by a simple pledge: ''I hope when I leave this place, I contributed to making it a better place.''

His legacy in Fort Collins was indeed a life of community service and devotion to his family. Dr. Carson passed away in February of this year, and I think it would be safe to say that Fort Collins was a better place because of Dr. Carson's service to this community.

Karl was born on September 27, 1915, in Wichita, Kansas, to Daniel and Clara Helfrick Carson. He was raised on the family dairy farm, and every day before he went to school he milked cows and bottled milk. In high school, he met his lifelong sweetheart, Wilma Schull, and they married on August 23, 1936. To this union, five children were born: Allen, James, Daniel, Thomas and LuAnn. The Carsons also had eight grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Karl Carson attended Fort Hays State University in Kansas on a music scholarship, and he paid his way through college by singing at weddings and parties.

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He served in the United States Navy Reserve during World War II. He was a communication officer on the USS *Strive*, a mine sweeper.

Following his military service, Mr. Carson attended the University of Nebraska and received his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 1951. The Carson family moved to Fort Collins where Dr. Carson started his dental practice in

1954. His practice thrived and continued until retirement in 1994. Amazingly, for 30 of those 43 years he practiced dentistry with his son, Tom. In 1991, the Colorado Dental Association gave him its Distinguished Service Award.

Dr. Carson was a member of the Fort Collins City Council from 1965 to 1973. He held the city's top post, mayor, for five terms, from 1968 to 1973 at a time when the city council elected the mayor. And he considered his support of adding fluoride to the Fort Collins water supply one of his greatest achievements. During his tenure, he started a program called Designing Tomorrow Today, which led to the construction of the Lincoln Center, city hall, and the downtown library.

Dr. Carson's community service is legendary. He was the director of downtown Fort Collins development, President of the Colorado Municipal League and the Colorado League of Cities. He was also a member of Kiwanis since 1938. Continuing his love of music and youth, he lent his expertise to participants in the Kiwanis annual Stars of Tomorrow Talent Show.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Karl Carson indeed fulfilled his legacy of leaving Fort Collins and this world a better place. The citizens of Fort Collins, Colorado, will never forget him. He was a man of love and commitment to his family and community. Upon hearing of his death in February of this year, the current mayor of Fort Collins, Doug Hutchinson, called Dr. Carson a ''City Father.''

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Karl Carson for his many contributions to the Fort Collins community by supporting this legislation.

Mr. CANNON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2570.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REQUIRING REPORT ON EFFORTS TO BRING TO JUSTICE PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS WHO KILLED JOHN BRANCHIZIO, MARK PARSON, AND JOHN MARIN LINDE

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2293) to require the Secretary of State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2293

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPORT RELATING TO THE MURDERS OF JOHN BRANCHIZIO, MARK PARSON, AND JOHN MARIN LINDE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On October 15, 2003, a convoy of clearly identified United States diplomatic vehicles was attacked by Palestinian terrorists in Gaza resulting in the deaths of John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde, and the injury of a fourth American.

(2) John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde were contract employees providing security to United States diplomatic personnel who were visiting Gaza in order to identify potential Palestinian candidates for scholarships under the Fulbright Program.

(3) Senior officials of the Palestinian Authority have stated that they were aware of the identities of the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde.

(4) Following her visit to Israel and the West Bank on February 7, 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that she had been ''assured by President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority's intention to bring justice to those who murdered three American personnel in the Gaza in 2003''.

(5) Since the bombing on October 15, 2003, United States Government personnel have been prohibited from all travel in Gaza.

(6) The United States Rewards for Justice program is offering a reward of up to $5,000,000 for information leading to the arrest or conviction of any persons involved in the murders of John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde.

(7) The Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde have still not been brought to justice.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the continued inability or unwillingness of the Palestinian Authority to actively and aggressively pursue the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde and bring them to justice calls into question the Palestinian Authority's suitability as a partner for the United States in diplomatic efforts to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict;

(2) future United States assistance to the Palestinian Authority may be suspended or conditioned, and the continued operation of the PLO Representative Office in Washington may be jeopardized, if the Palestinian Authority does not fully and effectively cooperate in bringing to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde; and

(3) it is in the vital national security interest of the United States to safeguard, to the greatest extent possible consistent with their mission, United States diplomats and all embassy and consulate personnel, and to use the full power of the United States to bring to justice any individual or entity that threatens, jeopardizes, or harms them.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 120 days thereafter, the Secretary of State shall submit a report, on a classified basis if necessary, to the appropriate congressional committees describing—

(1) efforts by the United States to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde;

(2) a detailed assessment of efforts by the Palestinian Authority to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde, including—

(A) the number of arrests, interrogations, and interviews by Palestinian Authority officials related to the case;

(B) the number of Palestinian security personnel and man-hours assigned to the case;

(C) the extent of personal supervision or involvement by the President and Ministers of the Palestinian Authority; and

(D) the degree of cooperation between the United States and the Palestinian Authority in regards to this case;

(3) a specific assessment by the Secretary of whether the Palestinian efforts described in paragraph (2) constitute the best possible effort by the Palestinian Authority; and

(4) any additional steps or initiatives requested or recommended by the United States that were not pursued by the Palestinian Authority.

(d) CERTIFICATION.—The requirement to submit a report under subsection (c) shall no longer apply if the Secretary of State certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde have been identified, arrested, and brought to justice.

(e) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''appropriate congressional committees'' means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam 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 the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2293, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The legislation the House is considering today will ensure that three brave Americans are not forgotten. I want to thank Chairman LANTOS and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN and my friend, the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. PENCE, for their support and cosponsorship of the bill.

Though my belief in the necessity of this legislation is complete, my feelings about the bill are mixed. I am proud that this House will today insist that justice be done for three Americans who died in the service of their country. But I am deeply troubled and saddened that this legislation is even necessary.

On October 15, 2003, John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde

were killed due to the detonation of a roadside car bomb in Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip. These young Americans were providing security to a mission of American diplomats on their way to Gaza to conduct interviews for Fulbright scholars to come to the United States. But they never made it.

Despite the easily recognized vehicles and the diplomatic plates marking them clearly as Americans, despite coordination with the Palestinian security authorities, despite the fact that they were on a mission of kindness and generosity, their lives were ended by a brutal and cowardly act. And ever since then, United States Government employees have been barred from entering Gaza.

Their deaths were tragic. But what followed, however, was a farce.

The attack took place near a manned Palestinian checkpoint; and immediately following the attack, journalists photographed Palestinian police officers standing by as onlookers cheered the attack and roamed the crime scene destroying critical evidence. But within 24 hours, the Palestinian Authority, quite literally, ''rounded up the usual suspects,'' four members of the so-called Popular Resistance Committee, or PRC.

Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, however, never presented a case against them. Held over for a month, the Palestinian court finally announced that the defendants would be released since ''no evidence was offered against'' them. They remained in jail despite the judge's order, however, pending Yasser Arafat's approval of their release. When that approval never came, a mob of PRC members stormed the jail the next month, without resistance, and freed the suspects.

A year later, on September 22, 2004, Arafat's cousin, the head of military intelligence in Gaza, told the Associated Press that though the identity of the killers was known, the United States would have to forgo justice in this case. Speaking of our Nation, he said, ''They know that we are in a very critical position and clashing with any Palestinian party under the presence of the occupation is an issue that will present many problems for us.''

''The Americans,'' he added, ''have started recently to understand our position and I expect that this crisis will also be resolved.''

Six months later, Secretary Condoleezza Rice raised the matter directly with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. I don't know that Abu Mazen, as Abbas is known, told our Secretary of State, but she publicly announced on February 7, 2006, ''We have been assured by President Abbas of the Palestinian Authority's intention to bring justice to those who murdered three American personnel in Gaza in 2003.''

Obviously, we are still waiting and with the Hamas takeover of the Gaza Strip, we may never know the truth, and justice may never be done.

I have been outspoken in my criticism of the administration's failure to use the fresh mandate Abbas had in 2006 to make real progress toward peace. We failed him, as did the Israelis, and we are now confronting the consequences of our shortsightedness. But in this case, in this small but meaningful case, Abu Mazen has failed us.

The case presented an opportunity to establish the Palestinian Authority's writ, to demonstrate that the PA was capable of handling the duties of a state, which above all is obliged to maintain law and order, for visitor and citizen alike.

There is still a $5 million bounty pending, through the Rewards for Justice program, but I doubt it will ever be paid. The Bush administration has been so lack in dealing with this case, so lackadaisical in the pursuit of justice for three Americans who died in the service of this Nation that I believe Congress must step in.

It is not in our power to compel justice, nor can we instill drive, initiative, or energy. But we can maintain accountability, and that is what this bill would do. Thirty days after passage, and every 120 days thereafter, the Secretary of State will have to present Congress with a progress report, and not a short one either. This report would require details, the kinds of sticky uncomfortable deals, the kind of sticky uncomfortable details that will show whether the Department is insisting on the pursuit of justice, or just waiting for it to show up on its own. We are not asking for the impossible. The most important requirement of the report is a specific assessment of whether the Palestinians are making their best effort and possible resolution.

Today, it is hard to say what that would look like. But very deliberately, this report will be prepared every 120 days in perpetuity until the Secretary can certify that the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde have been identified, arrested, and brought to justice.

I regret saying it, but justice for these three men was never as great a priority for the Bush administration as it ought to have been.

The vital national security interests of the United States require us to safeguard to the greatest extent possible consistent with their mission United States diploma tics and all embassy and consulate personnel, and to use the full power of the United States to bring justice to any individual or entity that threatens, jeopardizes, or harms them.

Every man and woman working for the United States abroad deserves this commitment. And so many months after their deaths, John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde deserve this much at the very least. I urge all of my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2293, which would require the Secretary of State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed three Americans on October 15, 2003.

I would like to begin by expressing my heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones of John Branchizio, Mark T. Parson, and John Marin Linde, Jr., and all United States citizens who have been victimized by the incessant Palestinian terrorist attacks.

These three brave Americans were murdered while accompanying United States diplomats who were going to interview young Palestinians for the opportunity to study in this great country on Fulbright scholarships, offering those youth a chance for a better life.

While I am sickened by this deplorable act, I am surprised that for far too long our State Department and the Palestinian Authority have done little to bring the murderers of these Americans to justice. These families and others who have lost loved ones should not have their grief compounded by the lack of justice from our own system.

The virtual impunity afforded the certain terrorists sends the wrong foreign policy signal, not only to the American people and our allies in the region, but to the terrorists themselves. Recently, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas established an emergency government in the West Bank, with an independent, Salem Fayyad as Prime Minister. Abbas and Fayyad have made statements opposing terrorism, violence and militia rule that pervades both the West Bank and Gaza. But they must follow up their words with actions.

Not only do Abbas and Fayyad need to crack down on terrorism and dismantle all militias within the West Bank, but they must locate, detain, and turn over to U.S. custody the murderers of John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde so that they can be charged and brought to justice in an American court. They cannot fulfill their responsibility for stopping terrorism in the future without taking action against those who have perpetrated terrorism in the past.

Madam Speaker, we have a great responsibility to those Americans who have lost their lives to Palestinian terror. Therefore, our government should consider conditioning any aid to the West Bank emergency government upon that government showing concrete actions in resolving this case. We must end the message that we as a country are fully committed in our resolve to investigate and prosecute the murder of innocent Americans abroad.

Again, I strongly condemn the attack on United States citizens by Palestinian terrorists and reiterate our demands that the administration do more to bring their killers to justice.

H.R. 2293 is a major step in the right direction, and I am proud to have cosponsored it. For their leadership in introducing this bill, I thank my good friends and colleagues, the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, Mr. ACKERMAN and Mr. PENCE. I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this critical legislation.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2293, which requires the Secretary of the State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde. This bill requires the Secretary of State to submit a report—classified, if necessary—within 30 days and every 120 days thereafter to the appropriate committees until the attackers have been brought to justice.

The bill also warns of potential restrictions on privileges extended to the Palestinian Authority by our government in the case of continued noncompliance, although I hope it will never come to that.

I commend my colleague Mr. ACKERMAN of New York for introducing this important measure. This resolution lends the full support of the United States Congress to bringing to justice the Palestinian terrorists who murdered three contractors providing security to American diplomatic personnel in Gaza on October 15, 2003. The Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde have still not been brought to justice.

John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde were slain by terrorists who assaulted a clearly marked convoy of American diplomats. Ironically, the diplomats were on a mission to help the Palestinians by identifying Gazan candidates for the Fulbright exchange program.

In February 2005, Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, assured Secretary of State Rice that the perpetrators would be brought to justice. Further, senior Palestinian officials asserted that the Palestinian Authority knew the identities of the assailants. Yet inexplicably, these terrorists have not been named; they have not been questioned; and they have not been arrested, charged, prosecuted, and punished. No way is that justice. Justice delayed is justice denied.

It is imperative that the legitimate leaders of the Palestinian Authority show their willingness to confront the scourge of terrorism if they are to be considered a reliable partner for peace.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this piece of legislation, and I ask that my colleagues do the same.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2293.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1515

HONORING OPERATION SMILE ON ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 208) honoring Operation Smile in the 25th Anniversary year of its founding, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 208

Whereas Operation Smile is a private, not-for-profit volunteer medical services organization providing reconstructive surgery and related health care to indigent children and young adults in developing countries and the United States;

Whereas in 1982, Dr. William P. Magee Jr., a plastic surgeon, and his wife, Kathleen S. Magee, a nurse and clinical social worker, traveled to the Philippines with a group of medical volunteers to repair children's cleft lips and cleft palates;

Whereas there they discovered hundreds of children ravaged by deformities, and although they helped many children, the volunteers were forced to turn away the majority of those who sought help;

Whereas Operation Smile headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, was founded in 1982 by Dr. William Magee Jr. and his wife Kathleen S. Magee to address this need;

Whereas since 1982, Operation Smile's volunteers have provided free reconstructive surgery to more than 100,000 children and young adults with facial deformities in 25 countries;

Whereas Operation Smile provides education and training to thousands of healthcare professionals globally, and is implementing a plan for a Global Standard of Care to ensure that every child treated will receive the same high standard of care every time;

Whereas Operation Smile provides a network of resources to assist families in the United States with children born with facial deformities;

Whereas more than 450 Operation Smile Student Associations in the United States and around the world build awareness, raise funds, and educate students about values of commitment, leadership, and volunteerism; and

Whereas in 2007, in commemoration of its 25th anniversary, Operation Smile has announced a year-long series of initiatives to include implementing global standards of care for all its medical programs, opening comprehensive care centers in seven countries, hosting international forums on medical diplomacy, and launching the World Journey of Smiles, which consists of 40 simultaneous missions in 25 countries with the goal of treating an estimated 5,000 children living with facial deformities: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile as its volunteer medical professionals continue to travel around the world to treat children suffering from facial deformities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I would like to thank our colleague, Congresswoman THELMA DRAKE, for sponsoring this important resolution and for her leadership on this issue.

Twenty-five years ago, William and Kathleen Magee of Virginia traveled with other medical professionals to the Philippines to treat children with facial deformities. Little did they know it was a trip that would change their lives and the lives of thousands of children around the world.

Inspired by the Filipino children, the Magees decided to start their own organization designed specifically to address cleft palates and cleft lips in countries where medical care leaves those afflicted with few options.

They called it Operation Smile, and the Magees were the perfect couple to start it. William is a plastic surgeon, and Kathleen is a nurse and social worker. Since 1982, operating out of their headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia, they have led a dedicated coalition of medical services workers to address facial deformities around the world.

Aside from appearance and comfort level, these are serious conditions that can cause problems with feeding and speech, as well as ear disease.

In the past 25 years, Operation Smile has provided corrective reconstructive surgery to some 100,000 children and young adults in 25 countries.

Operation Smile adeptly recognizes the differences in these countries and brings together medical professionals to tailor their care depending on the setting. The organization coordinates training activities, as well as fellowships and professorships, to further both its own mission and the medical system in these countries overall.

Operation Smile provides a network of resources to assist families in the United States with children born with facial deformities. It runs an annual international student leadership conference and student leadership program, and it trains surgeons in certain advanced skills.

We can all learn from Operation Smile and the model it provides to medical professionals and organizations around the world, and we can all learn from the Magees that public service can go far beyond one's chosen profession.

That is why I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to honor Operation Smile and William and Kathleen

Magee on the 25th anniversary of their organization.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 208, which recognizes the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile, a private nonprofit founded by Dr. and Mrs. William Magee of Virginia in 1982.

Madam Speaker, the volunteers for Operation Smile provide reconstructive surgery and other health care to needy children in the United States, as well as in developing countries. They particularly help children with a cleft lip or cleft palate, congenital birth defects that occur as frequently as one in every 600 births.

Clefts can cause multiple physical and mental health problems for children and adults, including feeding and speech difficulties, ear infections that can lead to deafness, and low self-esteem, as well as alienation from others.

Children worldwide need not, and must not, suffer from these health problems simply because they were born with clefts. Surgery in infancy, adolescence or young adulthood can correct clefts and avert resulting medical and psychological difficulties.

Sadly, many families who seek medical care and surgery for children born with clefts are turned away, both in the United States and abroad, due to lack of funds or shortages of medically trained professionals who can provide the care that these children urgently need.

Fortunately, the outstanding medical professionals at Operation Smile have, for a quarter of a century, volunteered their time and effort to help save these children and their families. They have provided free reconstructive surgeries to over 100,000 children and young adults in this country and worldwide. They educate and train thousands of health care professionals across the globe. Just as importantly, they are developing future generations of volunteers for this noble cause.

Young men and women at more than 450 Operation Smile student associations in the United States and abroad are fund-raising, building awareness and encouraging their fellow students to take charge, to lead and to volunteer their time to help others. In all of these ways, these volunteers demonstrate the potential that volunteers and nonprofits have to change lives, to tackle global problems and to significantly improve the world around them.

Because of their 25 years of service, many children and young adults who were born with cleft lip or palate can look at themselves in the mirror with pride, and so can volunteers at Operation Smile.

This resolution, offered by my good friend and colleague from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) sends the right message by recognizing and encouraging outstanding volunteers and achievements in the private and the nonprofit sector.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I urge the House to adopt this resolution, H. Res. 208.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to commend the efforts of Operation Smile during their 25 years of service to the United States and to the world. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congresswoman DRAKE, for sponsoring this resolution and bringing it to the floor. As we both represent the city of Norfolk, VA, the home of Operation Smile, I would just like to say a few words about Operation Smile and its efforts to help children around the world.

What Operation Smile has accomplished since its inception is truly remarkable. Since its first mission in the Philippines in 1982, Operation Smile volunteers have treated more than 100,000 children and young adults and have trained thousands of health professionals around the world. In addition, through pure determination, Operation Smile has built bridges and built trust. As a result, it has created a presence, earned the respect of governments and ministries of health, and united cultures in over 25 developing countries.

Operation Smile consists of a diverse group of volunteers from various countries and cultures, who come together with the common goal of repairing childhood facial deformities. Through these missions, the strongest bonds of friendships are forged as people who have very little in common work together to change a life. Operation Smile has demonstrated an ability to find working partnerships amid unstable and controversial conditions. Through diplomacy and leadership, coupled with medical aid and technology, it is able to heal and inspire cross-cultural cooperation.

While promoting medical diplomacy, Operation Smile continues to cross borders, bridge cultural and ethnic divides, and encourage collaboration and commitment. Its success has been astounding and as a result, Operation Smile has become the largest volunteer charity of its kind. Its efforts go beyond children and their families—Operation Smile changes communities, students, medical professionals, and healthcare systems.

Just this past year, Operation Smile traveled to Jordan on two separate occasions in order to provide life-changing surgeries to 138 Iraqi children who were transported to Amman from Baghdad, and it worked with the Mercy ships to treat 54 children in Bangladesh. These missions consisted of volunteers from over a dozen countries who worked together side by side to help these children. In this time of war, the volunteers of Operation Smile managed to bring a bright light to the lives of these children that will last a lifetime.

In the war against terrorism, hatred of Americans by other populations is a significant problem. The work of Operation Smile is immeasurable in developing good will to counteract that hatred. The doctors and other volunteers who work with Operation Smile and the children who have been helped by Operation Smile will serve as perpetual evidence of our good will and the best America has to offer. I cannot think of better ambassadors for the United States than the founders of Operation Smile, Dr. Bill and Kathleen Magee.

In 1982, Bill and Kathleen saw a need both abroad and here at home to help children with deformities live a better and happier life. Because of their diligence, and that of the many volunteers and donors that have worked with Operation Smile over the past 25 years, Operation Smile has not only created smiles, but has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of children across the globe.

I would like to once again commend Operation Smile on the occasion of their 25th anniversary, and I wish them continued success bringing smiles to the faces of children and families worldwide.

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th Anniversary of Operation Smile, a worldwide children's medical charity that repairs cleft lips and cleft palates for children and young adults in developing countries. Operation Smile, which is headquartered in Norfolk, VA, was founded by Dr. William Magee, Jr., a plastic surgeon, and his wife, Kathleen, a nurse and clinical social worker.

In 1982, the Magees traveled to the Philippines with a group of medical volunteers to repair children's cleft lips and cleft palates. While many children were treated, the inundated volunteers, lacking in resources and manpower, were forced to turn away the majority of those who sought help.

The Magees were heartbroken to see such an overwhelming need. Yet, instead of being discouraged, the Magees were inspired by their experience. As they prepared to leave the Philippines the Magees made a promise to return to the Philippines to help more children and Operation Smile was born.

The Magees returned to Norfolk and began to solicit the donations of surgical equipment and supplies, began grassroots fundraising, and assembled a volunteer team of doctors, nurses and technicians. Just as they promised, the Magees returned to the Philippines to treat even more patients.

Since those humble beginnings in 1982, Operation Smile has grown into a worldwide children's medical charity whose network of medical volunteers are dedicated to helping improve the health and lives of children and young adults worldwide. Operation Smile has helped more than 100,000 children and young adults in 30 developing countries overcome their physical irregularities. The organization now operates one of the world's largest volunteer networks, utilizing more than 5,000 medical and non-medical professionals around the world.

During their medical missions, credentialed medical professionals volunteer to repair facial deformities while building public and private partnerships that advocate for sustainable healthcare systems for children and families. Furthermore, Operation Smile trains and educates local medical professionals and leaves behind necessary equipment to lay the groundwork for long-term self-sufficiency.

I commend the Magees for their passion to improve the health and lives of children and young adults worldwide. Through Operation Smile, their efforts over the past 25 years have offered new life and new hope to those suffering from facial deformities and their families. In recognition of Operation Smile's 25th Anniversary, I am truly honored to commend their noble work here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. WATSON. 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 California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 208, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO FOR ENACTMENT OF A LAW TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF MARRIED WOMEN

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 294) commending the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the occasion of International Women's Day, for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 294

Whereas the Kingdom of Lesotho is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy that has been an independent country since 1966;

Whereas Lesotho is a low-income country with a gross national income per capita of $960 and 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line;

Whereas, in Lesotho, the HIV prevalence is estimated at 23 percent for the total adult population and 56 percent for pregnant women between the ages of 25 and 29, and the current average life expectancy at birth is estimated to be 34.4 years;

Whereas the Kingdom of Lesotho, referred to by some as the ''Kingdom in the Sky'', was a strong public supporter of the end of apartheid in South Africa, and the Government of Lesotho granted political asylum to a number of refugees from South Africa during the apartheid era;

Whereas the Government of Lesotho has demonstrated a strong commitment to ruling justly, investing in people, ensuring economic freedom, and controlling corruption;

Whereas the Government of Lesotho has been named eligible by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for a Compact of financial assistance that, as currently proposed, would strongly focus on improving and safeguarding the health of the people of Lesotho, in addition to supporting projects for sustainable water resource management and private sector development;

Whereas, historically, a married woman in Lesotho was considered a legal minor during the lifetime of her husband, was severely restricted in economic activities, was unable to enter into legally binding contracts without her husband's consent, and had no standing in civil court;

Whereas legislation elevating the legal status of married women and providing property and inheritance rights to women in Lesotho was introduced as early as 1992;

Whereas for years women's groups, nongovernmental organizations, the Federation of Women Lawyers, officials of the Government of Lesotho, and others in Lesotho have pushed for passage of legislation strengthening rights of married women;

Whereas in a letter to the Government of Lesotho in September 2006, the chief executive officer of the MCC stated that gender inequality is a constraint on economic growth and poverty reduction and is related to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, and that inattention to issues of gender inequality could undermine the potential impact of the Compact proposed to be entered into between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho;

Whereas the MCC's advocacy of gender equity played a supportive role in the enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act in the Kingdom of Lesotho, which effectively eliminated ''de jure'' discrimination against women in the customary law system;

Whereas the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act was passed by the Parliament of Lesotho and enacted into law in November 2006;

Whereas the MCC has already provided assistance to further full and meaningful implementation of the new law; and

Whereas the MCC has promulgated and is currently implementing a new gender policy to integrate gender into all phases of the development and implementation of the Compact between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) applauds the enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act by the Kingdom of Lesotho;

(2) lauds the Kingdom of Lesotho for demonstrating its commitment to improve gender equity;

(3) encourages the Kingdom of Lesotho to continue its effort to ensure gender equity; and

(4) commends the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for developing and implementing policies to advance gender equity in the Kingdom of Lesotho and other countries eligible for financial assistance from the MCC.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

H. Res. 294, as amended, commends the government of Lesotho for changing its laws to effectively eliminate legal discrimination against women in Lesotho's legal system.

In many parts of the world, women's rights are extremely limited, or barely exist, compared to the rights of men. While women and girls constitute 51 percent of the world's population and make up 70 percent of all agricultural workers, they continue to suffer more from poverty, chronic hunger, HIV/AIDS, and lack of access to education. Women often constitute the highest percentage of those dispossessed of their land, disadvantaged by customary law and traditions which privilege men. Women are often subject to discriminatory laws that restrict their civil, economic and property rights.

Until the passage of this law in Lesotho, women were defined as legal in Lesotho after marriage. Lesotho women had no rights to enter into economic transactions without the consent of their husbands. They could not purchase or inherit property and had no standing in the courts.

Customary law in Lesotho ensured that property belonged to the husband, or was entrusted to a male relative. In many instances, after the death of a parent or spouse, or in the event of a divorce or after an out-of-court settlement, many married women got nothing other than their personal effects.

In November of 2006, His Majesty King Letsie III and the government of Lesotho took a major step towards correcting this grave injustice against women citizens by enacting the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act, giving Lesotho women many of the rights they have long been denied.

If faithfully implemented, the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act will be an important vehicle for gender equality in Lesotho. It will certainly go a long way towards reducing the risk of women, particularly widows, divorcees and their children from falling into extreme poverty, which will increase their risk of exposure to the HIV/AIDS pandemic which has devastated the country's poorest population.

In a country where nearly 25 percent of adults are infected with HIV/AIDS and the life expectancy of women is 44 years, this new law is crucial to removing barriers to access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for women and girls.

There is still progress that needs to be made on gender equity in Lesotho. According to the State Department, ''a woman married under customary law has no standing in civil court. Under the country's dual legal system, marriages which occur under customary law must be legalized in the civil system to have legal standing.''

But I believe the efforts of the government of Lesotho are showing real progress in the area of promoting equal rights for women, and I believe it's our responsibility to acknowledge the efforts of those people seeking to empower individuals from all walks of society. As right and overdue as it might be to make these changes, that does not make them easy changes in a society that has done things a certain way for so long a time. Hence, if we wish to see more political leaders around the

world stand up and make the effort to change their societies for the better, we should be making as much of an effort here to support those efforts.

The actions of the Lesotho government, to guarantee equity for women under the law, will serve as an important model for other African Nations in addressing their national health and poverty challenges, and I look forward to the replication of this law across the continent of Africa.

And that is why this resolution also acknowledges another factor in making this change to empower the women of Lesotho.

□ 1530

It was through the work of the Millennium Challenge Corporation that we were able to encourage the best instincts of Lesotho's political leadership to make these changes into law. It is instructive to pay attention to how the MCC's leadership convinced Lesotho to make these changes.

They did not demand a change as a quid pro quo for MCC assistance. Instead, they appealed to the Lesotho Government's sense of reason, by convincing them that any assistance provided by the United States for economic development would be only half as effective if half of Lesotho's population was excluded from the formal economy.

I know we have had some concerns here in Congress about the MCC and its effectiveness, and I think it's important for us to look very carefully at the MCC and our entire U.S. foreign assistance delivery system, because I fear there has been a dreadful lack of effective leadership over this avowed pillar of U.S. foreign policy.

But I think there are a great deal of positive lessons to draw from the success of the MCC, and I hope we can support the MCC as it works to strengthen and expand its efforts.

I think the MCC's concept and directions are promising, and I hope the MCC's future efforts will bring more opportunities to introduce resolutions such as this one, and I am really proud to have presented this resolution, because that was one of the locations that I was asked to go to as an ambassador. Instead, I went to Micronesia, so I am really, really interested in how they make progress, and particularly how they empower their women. I urge all my colleagues to do the same and support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to thank my colleague from California, Ambassador Watson, for introducing this important resolution, House Resolution 294, which commends the Kingdom of Lesotho for enacting a law to improve the legal status of married women.

Historically, a married woman in this African country was considered a minor under the law, and, as such, was unable to enter into contracts without her husband's consent and was severely restricted in economic activities and had no legal standing in the courts. This was the case, despite that women have traditionally borne a disproportionate share of responsibility for the health, the welfare, and the education of the family in Lesotho.

They are in the fields, in the markets, in the classrooms, and in the clinics. They run the home and provide the food, care and education essential for the survival of their families. Women serve as the backbone of society in Lesotho. Yet under the law, they have been considered only half a person.

Obviously, this was a grave social injustice that required remedy. I commend those in the government and in civil society who began pressing for greater gender equality in Lesotho as early as 1992.

But it is important to realize that gender inequality in Lesotho, and throughout Africa, is not just an issue of human rights. This is a development issue and an issue of national security.

Over half of the population lives below the poverty level. Yet a government cannot responsibly expect to lift its people out of poverty while legally excluding half of the most productive segment of society from the economy.

Further, at 29 percent, Lesotho has one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world. Life expectancy already has plummeted to 36 years, and prevalence rates are expected to climb to a staggering 36 percent in the next 15 years.

The HIV pandemic is obliterating a generation of the most productive people in Africa. In South Africa, for example, factory managers routinely complain that they have to hire two people to fill a single position due to absentee rates related to HIV.

When a man dies, who is left to provide for his family? His wife. But if a wife and a mother cannot secure even basic inheritance rights and has no standing in civil court, then how is she to provide for the next generation? The traditional safety net provided by the extended family has been eroded, and coping mechanisms have been exhausted by the HIV pandemic.

Women whose husbands have died are suspected to carry the virus themselves and are often shunned by their extended families and communities. Thus, high death rates associated with HIV/AIDS and gender inequalities are leaving behind a generation of impoverished, disaffected youth who are susceptible to criminal activities and radical acts.

In recognition of the links between gender inequality, poverty and HIV/AIDS, the Millennium Challenge Corporation made gender issues a high priority in its negotiations with Lesotho.

In a letter to the Government of Lesotho, the CEO of MCC asserted that the potential impact of a development compact between Lesotho and the MCC focusing on public health and sustainable water and private sector development would be undermined if the issues of gender inequality were not addressed.

Shortly thereafter, the Parliament passed the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act, which has significantly enhanced the legal standing of women in Lesotho. To its credit, the MCC has provided assistance to support meaningful implementation of the act.

I strongly encourage the government of Lesotho to continue demonstrating its commitment to improving gender equality in the interest of human rights, economic development, and national security. I hope that other countries in the region will follow suit.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 294, commending the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the occasion of International Women's Day, for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights.

Let my first begin by thanking my distinguished colleague on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a member of its subcommittee on Africa and the Global Health, Congresswoman WATSON, for recognizing this issue and introducing this vital resolution. It is important that we recognize and commend the role and the efforts that the Government of Lesotho has taken to further gender equity. International Women's Day, observed on March 8, 2007, calls for people to recognize the accomplishments of women, while reaffirming their commitment to continue the struggle for equality, justice, and peace. This is a milestone that demands worldwide recognition, and I applaud our United States Congress for taking this role.

The Kingdom of Lesotho is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy that has been an independent country since 1966. Often referred to as the "Kingdom in the Sky," Lesotho was a strong public supporter of ending apartheid in South Africa, and was known for granting political asylum to numerous refugees during that era. Lesotho is a low-income country with a gross national income per capita of $960, and 50 percent of its people live below the poverty line. However, its Government has demonstrated a strong commitment to ruling justly, investing in its people, ensuring economic freedom, as well as controlling corruption.

Madam Speaker, in the Kingdom of Lesotho, a married woman would historically be considered a legal minor during the lifetime of her husband. Such status would severely restrict her economic activities, forbid her from entering into legally binding contracts without her husband's consent, and hamper her ability to have standing in civil court. As early as 1992, legislation aimed at elevating the legal status of married women and providing property and inheritance rights to women in Lesotho was introduced. Since then, women's groups, nongovernmental organizations, the Federation of Women Lawyers, Lesotho Government officials, and many others have continually pushed for the passage of legislations which would strengthen their rights.

As a strong advocate of women's rights, it has continually been my role to denounce human rights violations against women, as

well as fight for gender equity. I must certainly agree with the Chief Executive Officer of the MCC, who stated that ''gender inequality is a constraint on economic growth and poverty reduction and is related to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, and that inattention to issues of gender inequality could undermine the potential impact of the Compact proposed to be entered into between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho.''

Madam Speaker, the MCC is currently implementing a new gender policy to integrate gender into all phases of the development and implementation of the Compact between the MCC and the Government of Lesotho. It is now the responsibility of the United States House of Representatives to support the goals of Lesotho's International Women's Day, commend them on their strong commitment to improving gender equity, as well as applaud their enactment of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act.

Lesotho's actions aimed at guaranteeing equity for women under the law ought to serve as a model for many other African nations, where women have been subjected to discriminatory laws in the areas of civil, economic, and property rights. This resolution will certainly go a long way in reducing the risk of women and their children falling into extreme poverty, eventually reducing their risk of exposure to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. I ask my colleagues to support this measure. Let us continue to encourage the Kingdom of Lesotho in its ongoing efforts to ensure gender equity. Let us commend the Millennium Challenge Corporation for developing and implementing policies to advance gender equity.

I thank you once again, Congresswoman WATSON, for your efforts in introducing this piece of legislation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 294, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: ''A resolution commending the Kingdom of Lesotho for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING WORLD RED CROSS RED CRESCENT DAY

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 378) honoring World Red Cross Red Crescent Day, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 378

Whereas World Red Cross Red Crescent Day was observed on May 8, 2007;

Whereas May 8 marks the birth of Henry Dunant, the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross, who began advocating for the humane treatment of the wartime sick and wounded after witnessing the atrocities at the Battle of Solferino in 1859;

Whereas World Red Cross Red Crescent Day is celebrated by many of the 185 Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom National Societies throughout the world and more than 750 chapters throughout the United States;

Whereas through the motivation and action of its volunteers and donors, the American Red Cross and its partners worldwide pay tribute to Henry Dunant's legacy by helping those in need and protecting human dignity for all;

Whereas the American Red Cross helps vulnerable people and communities around the world to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters, complex humanitarian emergencies, and life-threatening health conditions;

Whereas the American Red Cross is uniquely positioned to save lives through the Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom National Societies network of 97,000,000 volunteers located in nearly every country in the world;

Whereas in 2006, the American Red Cross responded to 23 international disasters, contributing more than $16.1 million in financial support, deploying delegates and providing relief supplies and other emergency assistance to millions affected by disasters;

Whereas the American Red Cross continues to help affected communities recover from the tsunami that resulted from the earthquake that occurred off the west coast of northern Sumatra, Indonesia, on December 26, 2004, by providing assistance to more than 3.3 million people through long-term recovery programs and more than 80 million people through disease control activities in the tsunami-affected countries;

Whereas since 2001, the American Red Cross and its partners in the Measles Initiative have vaccinated more than 372 million children in 48 countries against measles; and

Whereas World Red Cross Red Crescent Day will honor the efforts of Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom employees and volunteers who work tirelessly to alleviate human suffering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives commends the humanitarian efforts of Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom National Societies worldwide on the occasion of World Red Cross Red Crescent Day.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for all Members to 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

I would first like to commend our distinguished colleague, Mr. FORTUÑO of Puerto Rico, for introducing this resolution.

More than 140 years ago, the great Henry Dunant founded the International Committee of the Red Cross after witnessing the atrocities of the Battle of Solferino in 1859.

Mr. Dunant's heroic advocacy on behalf of the humane treatment of wartime sick and wounded spawned a global movement dedicated to helping those in need and protecting human dignity for all.

Today, there are more than 185 Red Cross, Red Crescent and Magen David Adom societies throughout the world and more than 750 chapters in the United States alone. These organizations help vulnerable people in communities prevent, prepare for and respond to and recover from disasters, complex humanitarian emergencies and life-threatening conditions. The red symbols of these great organizations are unambiguous, internationally recognized, signs of comfort, hope and protection.

The American Red Cross, in particular, is a vital lifeline for many people, both in this country and abroad. In conjunction with its sister national societies throughout the world, it has assisted millions of distressed individuals.

In 2006 alone, the American Red Cross responded to 23 international disasters and contributed more than $16.1 million in financial support. Often beyond the lens of cameras or public view at some of the most devastated corners on Earth, the American Red Cross represents our country and our national spirit of generosity and hope.

To honor Mr. Dunant's legacy and the work of thousands of volunteers and donors, the American Red Cross and its partners will celebrate World Red Cross Red Crescent Day. This resolution pays tribute to this event and to the work of thousands of volunteers internationally. It reaffirms our country's support for the world's largest humanitarian network and celebrates the values of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom societies.

I am pleased to note that for the first time World Red Cross Red Crescent day will include Magen David Adom, Israel's national Red Cross society, which became a full member of the international movement in 2006.

I strongly support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 378 introduced by my good friend and colleague from Puerto Rico (Mr. FORTUÑO).

This resolution commends the humanitarian efforts of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Magen David Adom societies worldwide on the occasion of World Red Cross Red Crescent Day.

These organizations and their 97 million volunteers worldwide make invaluable contributions every day. They provide relief and humanitarian assistance to the world's most vulnerable people, alleviating the suffering of citizens afflicted by war, natural disasters and other crises.

More than 233 million people worldwide received assistance from Red Cross, Red Crescent and Magen David Adom societies each year. When a tsunami hit southeast Asia in 2005, those societies were there. When hundreds of millions of children require vaccination against measles and others diseases, those societies are there. When the need arises in the future for humanitarian aid and relief, those societies will be there.

As a Member of Congress from Florida's 18th District, I have witnessed firsthand the good works of the Red Cross throughout its efforts to help the victims of numerous hurricanes and tropical storms that have afflicted the residents of south Florida.

I have also witnessed firsthand, in my numerous trips to Israel, the relief work and the humanitarian assistance that the Magen David Adom has provided to so many, including, tragically, the many innocent victims of terror.

Therefore, I am particularly pleased that in 2006, in a long overdue development, the International Committee of the Red Cross officially recognized Magen David Adom as Israel's national aid society. With much appreciation for the good work of Red Cross, Red Crescent and Magen David Adom societies everywhere, I urge the House to adopt House Resolution 378, introduced by my good friend, Mr. FORTUÑO.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for this resolution honoring the humanitarian work of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent.

In February of this year, southern Iowa was hit by a devastating ice storm that caused massive damage and left tens of thousands of people without electricity or heat in the middle of winter, some for more than ten days.

The Red Cross moved expeditiously to set up vitally needed shelters and coordinated with state and local governments to ensure that the needs of those affected by the storm were met.

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, I had the opportunity to tour Red Cross shelters throughout my district and to meet with Red Cross volunteers. I was enormously impressed with the Red Cross's rapid, thorough, and compassionate response to the disaster, which affected everyone of my constituents.

On behalf of the Second District of Iowa, I would like to extend my thanks to the Red Cross for the services they provided in the aftermath of the February storms.

This resolution recognizes the type of work I saw the Red Cross carrying out first-hand, and I strongly urge its passage.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 378, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: ''Resolution commending the humanitarian efforts of Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom National Societies worldwide on the occasion of World Red Cross Red Crescent Day.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1545

PASSPORT BACKLOG REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 966) to enable the Department of State to respond to a critical shortage of passport processing personnel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 966

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 ''Passport Backlog Reduction Act of 2007''.

SEC. 2. REEMPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN SERVICE ANNUITANTS.

Section 824(g) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4064(g)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by striking ''; or'' and inserting a semicolon;

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the period at the end and inserting ''; or''; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph—

''(C)(i) to provide assistance to consular posts with a substantial backlog of visa applications; or

''(ii) to provide assistance to meet the demand resulting from the passport and travel document requirements set forth in section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–458; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note), including assistance related to the investigation of fraud in connection with an application for a passport.''; and

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) by striking ''The authority'' and inserting ''(A) The authority''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraphs:

''(B) The authority of the Secretary to waive the application of subsections (a) through (d) for an annuitant pursuant to subparagraph (C)(i) of paragraph (1) shall terminate on September 30, 2008.

''(C) The authority of the Secretary to waive the application of subsections (a) through (d) for an annuitant pursuant to subparagraph (C)(ii) of paragraph (1) shall terminate on September 30, 2009.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the U.S. passport system is broken and the average Americans are paying the price. We have heard their call for help and are here today to pass the Passport Backlog Reduction Act to help the State Department address this bureaucratic crisis.

Every citizen of our Nation has the right to hold a passport and getting one should only take a few weeks at most, but millions of Americans have had to wait for months on end simply for the right to travel abroad. People are lining up at dawn every day at passport offices around the country trying to salvage trips at the last minute. They are desperate to get the one document that will let them see ailing relatives overseas, conduct important business, or begin studying abroad programs.

A passport is much more than a travel document, and these delays are much more than an inconvenience. A passport is proof of American identity and, for many Americans with immigrant heritage, a passport is proof of their identity and commitment to America and the American idea. A passport must be available to any American citizen who requests one, and delays that are currently clogging our system are preventing American citizens from fully exercising their right of citizenship as well as freedom of travel.

Three years ago, Congress passed the law requiring travelers to show passports if they were returning from anywhere in the Western hemisphere. Demand for passports in the last year has been at record highs, but poor planning by top officials meant that the State Department was unprepared to cope with the surge in applications.

My colleagues and I on the Foreign Affairs Committee have been outraged by this poor planning and the resulting bottleneck. Last week the committee held a hearing on passport delays, and we heard testimony about the hard-working employees who are working through the night and giving up their weekends to clear the backlog of applications. At passport bureaus across the country the State Department has shipped in junior staff, government fellows, and rehired retirees to meet the crushing demand. Yet, phone calls to regional passport bureaus and to consular affairs offices have often gone unanswered on tens of thousands of occasions. Meanwhile, congressional offices

are being flooded with phone calls from outraged citizens. They wonder if their passports have simply disappeared.

The Passport Backlog Reduction Act will assist the State Department's efforts to get all of the filed passports back to waiting travelers, and keep up with the demand in the coming months. This bill lifts legal impediments so that the agency can hire retired foreign service officers to process passport applications. Some of these officers will also be permitted to assist the officials who investigate passport fraud to ensure that passports only go to those citizens who are eligible for them and who do not pose a security risk.

Endless delays in exercising every citizen's right to a passport are outrageous and absolutely unacceptable. So, I urge my colleagues to support this bill so the House can take one additional step to ensure that our citizens' demands for their passports are met expeditiously.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of Senate bill 966, the Passport Backlog Reduction Act. All of us have heard from our constituents. Millions of Americans are facing unprecedented delays in the processing of their passport applications. As weeks become months, these painful holdups have wrecked long-planned travel, job opportunities, and family obligations for thousands of our fellow citizens. This situation is incomprehensible and inexcusable. Officials should have anticipated and planned for this increased demand when the new travel security requirements were legislated 3 years ago.

Furthermore, the State Department has been collecting additional surcharges under authority granted by Congress 1½ years ago for the express purpose of meeting the increased demand for passports. But as we learned at last week's hearing before the Foreign Affairs Committee, officials did not adequately prepare for the increased demand that everyone knew would be coming, and there is no good explanation why.

At the same time that the planning was botched by their superiors, I want to praise the dedicated and hard-working individuals who have been working on an extended and overtime schedule to address this backlog. Madam Speaker, I am particularly impressed by the men and women of the Miami passport processing center who have maintained their professionalism and their courtesy even in this high pressure situation.

The bill before us will help in a limited but an important way to restore the timely passport processing that the American public has every right to expect. By easing certain reemployment restrictions, it will enable retired Foreign Service officers to come back to work on passport and visa processing on more than a part-time basis. It will also allow them to assist with passport fraud investigations which have not kept pace with the dramatic increase in passport applications.

Of course, this bill is only a temporary measure that will ease but will not fix the larger problem. Senate bill 966 is no substitute for the budgeting, hiring, and training that must be part of the Department's annual and long-range planning. We appreciate the solemn assurances at last week's hearing that the Departments of State and Homeland Security are now treating these problems with the seriousness that they deserve. I have no doubt that the Committee on Foreign Affairs under Chairman LANTOS' leadership will follow up to ensure that the current problems are remedied promptly and avoided in the future.

The bill before us, Madam Speaker, is a small part of that remedy and deserves our unanimous support.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Representative RUBÉN HINOJOSA.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Passport Backlog Reduction Act of 2007, or S. 966.

As I represent a district in south Texas, ensuring a safe and secure border which remains conducive to trade and travel is among my most urgent priorities in Congress. For that reason, I greatly appreciate the work of Senators SCHUMER and BIDEN, as well as my colleagues Congressman CAPUANO and Congresswoman MCCARTHY, in bringing this legislation forward.

Several months ago, my constituents began reporting to me that they were not receiving the passports they needed for spring and summer travel from the State Department within the Department's own posted timelines. As spring has turned to summer, many Americans have been unable to travel abroad and have missed many business, educational, and vacation opportunities as a result of the State Department's failure to provide them with required travel documents.

This bill will help to ease the backlog of passport applications caused by the State Department's mismanagement by allowing retired workers to voluntarily return to work without jeopardizing their pension eligibility. These volunteers will provide immediate assistance to the thousands of American travelers who have requested their travel documentation in a timely manner and expect the State Department to facilitate their travel plans.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in providing relief to American travelers.

Mr. MANZULLO. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of S. 966, which gives the Department of State the authority to re-hire Foreign Service retirees without harming their pensions through October 1, 2010 to temporarily increase more personnel to reduce the backlog on passport applications. S. 966 has already passed the Senate and it is time to send this bill on its way to the President's desk for his signature. I appreciate the expeditious consideration of this legislation to give the State Department another tool to help them deal with the massive increase in the number of passport applications.

I hate to say "I told you so" but in 2005 I predicted this train wreck. When I chaired the Small Business Committee, I held a hearing on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) in 2005 primarily to examine the effect of WHTI on small business. At the time, I said that because of the amount of commerce within the Western Hemisphere it "may make it next to impossible to fulfill the statutory mandate to require this enhanced documentation."

I recognize that Congress gave the Departments of State and Homeland Security a difficult mission to implement within a short time period. I was one of the 75 Members to vote against the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 that contained the WHTI mandate.

However, since WHTI was implemented on January 23, my office has been inundated with frantic calls from constituents seeking passports to travel overseas. So far this year, my office has assisted 491 individuals with problems in obtaining their passports for travel. For all of 2006, my office helped just 51 constituents with passport problems. These calls are dominating the time of the caseworkers in my district offices.

Although we have been 99 percent successful in getting people the passports they need to travel, it has not been easy. Our caseworkers spend countless hours on the phone each day with panicked constituents who face the prospect of losing thousands of dollars and missing out on dream vacations if we cannot help them. And it seems we are always in crisis mode. Many passports do not get issued until two to three days before departure, and that is done with a continual push from my staff.

Despite constant monitoring and advocacy by my staff, some constituents do not receive their passports within 48 hours of departure. The last resort for these constituents is to take a day off work and travel to downtown Chicago—about two hours away—to get their passports on an emergency basis. I am told that although these constituents arrive before the required 7:00 a.m. opening time, it generally takes all day to get their passports.

Madam Speaker, you might not feel as bad if these were people who did not follow the rules and who waited until the last minute to get their passports. But a vast majority of the people who seek our assistance have done everything our Government asked of them. They applied for their passports well within the allotted time to receive their passports on time for their departures. And yet, their vacations and thousands of dollars of investments are in jeopardy.

I applaud the State Department and DHS for trying to ease the situation last month when they agreed to allow people traveling to Mexico, Canada or the Caribbean to depart as long as they had receipts in hand showing they had applied for their U.S. passports. But problems still occur. Some have applied, but

the State Department website indicates their applications cannot be found and thus a receipt cannot be secured. In addition, some of the cruise lines in the Caribbean do not accept these receipts. This situation causes even more anxiety for my constituents.

I understand the goal of the WHTI, but its implementation has been difficult. It has caused unnecessary anxiety and enormous amounts of work for my constituents and my staff. We must come up with an alternative way to enhance our security or make severe adjustments in the way we manage WHTI so we don't leave high and dry the people who followed the rules to get their passports.

That is why I applaud the prompt scheduling of S. 966 so shortly after the Senate passed the bill at the end of last month. I urge my colleagues to pass S. 966 so that the bill can be signed into law by the President as soon as possible.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, our Nation is facing a serious backlog in the processing of passports. Since the new travel rules have been enacted, the number of Americans applying for a passport has increased dramatically. Unfortunately, the number of Foreign Service officers responsible for the processing of passport requests remains far below the necessary capacity. This discrepancy has led to long lines at passport offices nationwide and extended processing times.

During the summer months, travel typically increases to and from the United States. To assist U.S. residents with the passport backlogs, I have introduced H.R. 2845, a bill that allows for an increase in Foreign Service officers trained to handle passport requests. My good friend from New York, Senator SCHUMER, successfully moved similar legislation through the Senate, which we will be voting on today.

I am encouraged to see the House act on this important and time sensitive issue and am hopeful the President will quickly sign S. 699 to help alleviate the tremendous passport backlogs facing our constituents.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 966, the Passport Backlog Reduction Act of 2007. We are all very concerned by the extreme backlog in the passport system, and even more so by the apparent lack of adequate preparation that has led to the severe delays that our constituents are now experiencing. I would like to thank Senator SCHUMER for introducing this important legislation.

Madam Speaker, we all recognize the need to protect our Nation and to secure our borders. As a senior member of the Committee on Homeland Security, this has long been a priority for me, and I appreciate the need to continually review and update the policies we use to permit entry into the United States. However, I believe that the current delays are far in excess of what is excusable.

I have witnessed the suffering of those waiting to receive passports first I hand in Houston, where my office shares a building with the passport agency. I have spoken with many of the countless Americans who have carefully planned and saved money for family vacations, only to lose the money spent on plane tickets and hotel rooms when they are unable to procure passports. Families in which only one of many children receives a passport in time for travel. U.S. citizens desperate to travel overseas to see ailing relatives. Businessmen and women who are unable to complete necessary overseas travel while waiting to receive their documents. These individuals and families lined up on the streets of Houston are indicative of the huge numbers of Americans who are suffering as a result of the U.S. Government's failure to adequately prepare for the swell in passport demands.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the men and women in the Houston field office, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that as many Americans as possible receive the necessary travel documents. Washington has let them down by failing to provide them with the adequate resources and personnel to successfully do their job, and it has failed the American people. This is a situation that demands leadership from the top.

The Department of State Crisis Response Act of 2007 is an important first step toward alleviating the massive passport backlog that has developed since the recent implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, or WHTI. It allows the State Department to employ retired Foreign Service officers to process passport applications. Many Foreign Service retirees already possess the necessary training and security clearance for these functions, and could therefore be rapidly deployed to meet the ongoing crisis.

Under the provisions of this act, Foreign Service retirees can work without forgoing pension payments, provided that they either provide assistance to consular posts with a substantial backlog of visa applications, or they provide assistance in meeting the passport backlog resulting from the WHTI.

I firmly believe we must do all in our power to keep the American people, and our Nation itself, safe. This includes constantly reviewing and, as need be, revising our entrance policies. However, I also believe that we owe it to the American taxpayers to do everything that we can to allow free travel. We must work to ensure that such a serious problem does not occur in the future, while also working to immediately address the ongoing passport backlog. I strongly support this legislation, which is an important first step toward alleviating the existing passport delays, and I would like to encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LOEBSACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for the Passport Backlog Reduction Act.

Our country's passport system is broken. The backlog in processing passport applications has been a severe burden on businesses and families. My constituents have been forced to cancel or delay travel plans; pay thousands of dollars for international flights they were unable to board; and lose deposits on accommodations they were unable to use. The current situation is unacceptable.

The administration had 3 years to plan for the new passport requirements, yet the Department of State was caught flat-footed by the surge in applications. Eliminating the backlog as swiftly as possible should be a matter of priority for the State and Homeland Security Departments, and new passport requirements for land and sea travel should not be enacted until the staffing infrastructure is in place to do so.

This bill allows the State Department to rehire retired Foreign Service employees to staff passport processing centers. By providing access to highly qualified staff, this bill will assist the State Department in reducing the backlog in passport applications.

The administration's lack of foresight and planning has created significant problems for families in Iowa and across the Nation. I strongly urge the passage of this bill as a crucial step towards fixing our country's passport system.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 966, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTION OF MODELING AND SIMULATION TECHNOLOGY TO THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 487) recognizing the contribution of modeling and simulation technology to the security and prosperity of the United States, and recognizing modeling and simulation as a National Critical Technology.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 487

Whereas the United States of America is a great and prosperous Nation, and modeling and simulation contribute significantly to that greatness and prosperity;

Whereas modeling and simulation in the United States is a unique application of computer science and mathematics that depends on the validity, verification, and reproducibility of the model or simulation, and depends also on the capability of the thousands of Americans in modeling and simulation careers to develop these models;

Whereas members of the modeling and simulation community in government, industry, and academia have made significant contributions to the general welfare of the United States, and while these contributions are too numerous to enumerate, modeling and simulation efforts have contributed to the United States by—

(1) expanding the understanding of nuclear chain reactions during the Manhattan Project through some of the earliest simulations replicating the reaction process, which ultimately contributed to the end of World War II;

(2) serving as a foundational element of the Stockpile Stewardship Program, which enabled the President of the United States to certify the safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear stockpile for more than ten years without the use of live nuclear testing, which demonstrates the Nation's commitment to nuclear nonproliferation;

(3) accelerating the effectiveness of joint, coalition, and interagency training exercises, while dramatically reducing the costs of such exercises, as demonstrated by United States Joint Forces Command's 2007 homeland security exercise, Noble Resolve, which was conducted virtually and required 5

months, 140 personnel, and $2,000,000 for development, compared to a 2002 Millennium Challenge exercise that was conducted live and required 5 years, 14,000 personnel, and $250,000,000 for development;

(4) preserving countless human lives, as well as military and civilian aircraft, ships, and other vehicles through the rehearsal of repeatable, simulated emergencies that otherwise could not have been practiced;

(5) increasing the quality of health care through the development of medical simulation training, which led the Food and Drug Administration to require such training for physicians before certain high-risk procedures to treat heart disease and strokes;

(6) reducing the cost of health care, as demonstrated by medical malpractice insurance rate discounts being provided to anesthesiologists and obstetricians who include simulated procedures in their biennial training requirements;

(7) simulating large scale natural or manmade disasters to improve the effectiveness of local, State, and Federal first responders, law enforcement, and other agencies involved in a coordinated emergency response;

(8) forecasting weather and predicting climate change to enable scientists, industry, and policymakers to study the effects of climate change and also to prepare for extreme weather, such as hurricanes;

(9) protecting rivers, waterways, and endangered species reliant on these waters through the Environmental Protection Agency's hydrology Dynamic Stream Simulation and Assessment Model, which predicts impacts on water quality for the Truckee River, including its effect on Lake Tahoe and other portions of its basin;

(10) producing analysis that resulted in enhanced designs and construction of critical infrastructure, such as roads, interchanges, airports, harbors, railways, and bridges that increases transportation capacity and safety, and reduces travel time and environmental impact; and

(11) providing National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronauts training to ensure a safe and productive mission in space, including the utilization of the Shuttle Training Aircraft, which simulates real aircraft shuttle characteristics and enables NASA pilots to have 1,000 simulated shuttle landings before they land the Space Shuttle for the first time as a glider;

Whereas these contributions, in addition to numerous contributions that are not listed but that equally have brought prosperity to our Nation, demonstrate that modeling and simulation efforts have, and will continue to—

(1) provide vital strategic support functions to our Military;

(2) defend our freedom and advance United States interests around the world;

(3) promote better health care through improved medical training, improved quality of care, reduced medical errors, and reduced cost;

(4) encourage comprehensive planning for national disaster and emergency preparedness response;

(5) improve and secure our critical infrastructure and transportation systems;

(6) protect the environment; and

(7) allow the Nation to explore the Earth and space to further our understanding of our world and universe;

Whereas modeling and simulation frequently complements or replaces experimentation where experimentation is hazardous, expensive, or impossible, thus providing far greater capability than experimentation alone;

Whereas the modeling and simulation industry provides well-paying jobs to many Americans and represents an opportunity for Americans with strong foundations in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to contribute to the prosperity and security of the United States;

Whereas other countries have recognized the value of modeling and simulation as an opportunity to gain a competitive advantage over the United States economically and militarily, and some of these same countries produce more engineers each year than the United States;

Whereas modeling and simulation efforts are critically dependent on a fundamental education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;

Whereas modeling and simulation require unique knowledge, skills, and abilities that are not adequately incorporated into governmental occupational classification codes; and

Whereas advances in modeling and simulation can be achieved through innovation in the private sector, and proper export controls and intellectual property rights are critical to the continued growth and innovation in this sector: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends those who have contributed to the modeling and simulation efforts which have developed essential characteristics of our Nation;

(2) urges that, consistent with previous legislation passed by this and previous Congresses, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics remain key disciplines for primary and secondary education;

(3) encourages the expansion of modeling and simulation as a tool and subject within higher education;

(4) recognizes modeling and simulation as a National Critical Technology;

(5) affirms the need to study the national economic impact of modeling and simulation;

(6) supports the development and implementation of governmental classification codes that include separate classification for modeling and simulation occupations; and

(7) encourages the development and implementation of ways to protect intellectual property of modeling and simulation enterprises.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FEENEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam 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 H. Res. 487.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

□ 1600

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 487, which recognizes the contribution of modeling and simulation technology to the security and prosperity of the United States, and recognizing modeling and simulation as a national critical technology.

Modeling and simulation is an important technology. It allows scientists to understand the functioning of complex systems that would otherwise be impossible to comprehend. It allows developers to understand their products better. It allows industry to save money that would otherwise be spent on experimentation and to allocate those funds to other activities, and allows our military to understand the impacts of their weapons.

In short, modeling and simulation is a very powerful tool that has improved our lives in many ways. Americans lead the world in this technology, and we should acknowledge that. It's important that we nurture this industry and stimulate its further growth.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FEENEY. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Chairman GORDON for bringing this resolution successfully through his committee, and I rise in support of House Resolution 487, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, House Resolution 487 recognizes that modeling and simulation technology is a national critical technology essential for America's long-term national security and her economic prosperity.

As a member of the House Modeling and Simulation Caucus, and representing one of the largest modeling and simulation clusters in the United States, I urge that the House pass this resolution to help retain America's lead in this high-technology field.

Your child's or your grandchild's video game represents one product of the modeling and simulation industry. Aircraft training simulators provide another well-known example.

Simulation uses combinations of sound, sight and motion to make you feel that you are experiencing an actual event. Modeling involves the complex computer models used to create these artificial environments.

For training purposes, modeling and simulation places people in an artificial, but seemingly real, environment and puts them through their paces. Unlike live training, if you make a mistake, you get to live another day and learn valuable lessons.

In the latter part of the 20th century, the U.S. military revolutionized warfighting by emphasizing this high-fidelity training that simulates the stress and decision-making of actual combat. Servicemen and -women gain experience and judgment previously only earned on the actual battlefield, often through serious injury and death.

Substantial amounts of that simulation and training come from my congressional district where representatives of all service branches collaborate with the University of Central Florida and private contractors of all sizes to produce these training systems. As other speakers will note, other clusters of modeling and simulation excellence exist throughout the United States.

But such training expands beyond military uses. Commercial aviation's

enviable safety record is due in part to aircraft simulator training that prepares cockpit crews to handle complex and fast-paced emergencies.

In that vein, medical simulation is an especially promising and emerging field. By creating artificial, but seemingly real, environments, doctors and nurses can hone their skills in using sophisticated and invasive medical technology or in treating severely injured patients.

Beyond training, modeling and simulation replicates complex environments, allowing planners and designers to ask various ''what if'' questions.

Transportation planners simulate highway networks to determine how best to alleviate congestion. Emergency management experts simulate large-scale natural or manmade disasters to better improve coordinated emergency responses. Hurricane Katrina highlighted the need to better use modeling and simulation in order to protect life and property during such disasters.

Because of these growing numbers of uses, the modeling and simulation industry is rapidly growing and demands the best students with extensive math and science backgrounds including psychology, medicine, computer science, mathematics, engineering and physics.

In addition to the cluster in Central Florida, there's a great cluster of modeling and simulation in the Fourth Congressional District represented by Congressman RANDY FORBES, and I'd like to indulge my colleagues to paraphrase some important comments by Congressman FORBES and then would like to insert his comments, the original text, in the RECORD.

Representative FORBES points out that we can test a new airplane in a wind tunnel without risking human life and without building full scale airplanes. The benefits and applications of this technology are immediately obvious. We can learn a system in a more cost-effective, timely and safer manner. And, furthermore, we can simulate thousands of scenarios over and over again on a computer when it is too hazardous, expensive, or impossible to perform real world tests.

So, in short, modeling simulation tools allow us to understand complex interactions that would otherwise be impossible to comprehend using other means. If modeling and simulation sounds like it has the promise to dramatically change the way we apply science in our world, the fact is that it has already done so.

This resolution seeks to recognize the countless efforts of professionals who have taken this technology and applied it to make the United States a safer and more prosperous Nation.

The impact of modeling and simulation technology is felt in the private sector, academia, government, and across disciplines. Modeling and simulation tools have streamlined the design and manufacture of cars, homes, boats and airplanes, to name a few devices.

Modeling and simulation software designed in Illinois, for example, assists automotive engineers in designing engines that are more efficient, while reducing emissions that impact adversely our environment. Modeling and simulation analysis is also used in the engineering of major roads, bridges, harbors, railways and airports, all of which lead to increased transportation capacity and safety.

At the United States Joint Forces Command in the Fourth District of Virginia, represented by Congressman FORBES, modeling and simulation tools have accelerated the effectiveness of joint interagency exercises run by the command. One of their experimentation projects is to enhance our national security by running scenarios in an urban combat environment. The goal is to provide lessons learned for our troops in theater before they encounter the same situation on the ground.

Because of these kinds of valuable contributions, this resolution honors modeling and simulation by recognizing it as a national critical technology. National critical technology refers to those technologies essential to develop long-term national security and economic prosperity for our country. One example of the success historically of modeling and simulation is the famous Manhattan Project. It was early models and simulators that allowed scientists to develop an understanding of nuclear chain reactions that ultimately led to the end of World War II.

America's military have used simulators to train personnel for flying aircraft, ships, and we now use simulators to train soldiers and marines to detect roadside IEDs.

Additionally, in the past, medical malpractice insurance rates have included artificially high premiums because it was difficult to reduce the number of medical errors for certain medical procedures that were not routinely performed. Today, insurance discounts are being provided to anesthesiologists and obstetricians who include simulated procedures in their biennial training requirements.

Madam Speaker, the advantages that we have reaped from modeling and simulation go across all congressional districts and benefit all Americans in ways that are often unseen. I am thrilled to be a cosponsor of this resolution today.

I want to thank the chairman. The future is very bright and modeling, simulation and training will lead the way to make it a safer, brighter future for all Americans.

Central Florida represents one of the larger if not the largest Modeling and Simulation clusters in the United States. The Navy's NAVAIR Orlando and the Army's PEO–STRI are based in my District. Over 100 Modeling and Simulation companies directly employ over 6,000 people. Having reached a critical mass in Central Florida, the Modeling and Simulation industry continues to expand.

Central Florida achieved critical mass by leveraging relationships among military, academic, industry, and government entities. Locally, we refer to this rich and complex web of cooperation, collaboration, and partnerships as Team Orlando.

Over 50 years before ''jointness'' and ''transformation'' became favored concepts in the Department of Defense, the Navy and Army demonstrated these traits in Orlando by starting a partnership for the development of training systems. The Air Force and Marines joined as full partners during the 1990s. All military services use a common infrastructure of facilities, contracting, administration, and technology.

Collaboration with academia is demonstrated by the University of Central Florida and its Institute for Simulation and Training.

The private sector is represented by a portfolio of Modeling and Simulation companies. Recognized and established entities are present such as Lockheed Martin and SAIC. But Central Florida is also home to scores of innovative, entrepreneurial start-ups such as IDEAL Technologies and Vcom3D.

The lessons learned from Central Florida's experience can be applied nationally. Modeling and Simulation isn't a zero-sum game where success in one geographic area comes at the expense of another. This technology holds so much promise that everyone benefits from national cooperation and collaboration.

Today's resolution will help create a unified national identity for this technology. And it will raise this technology's profile within the Department of Defense, other government agencies, and the private sector.

Modeling and simulation allows us to better understand and control complex systems ranging from highway systems, manufacturing and processing facilities, and emergency management systems. Modeling and simulation also trains people to handle complex and fast-paced situations ranging from warfighting to emergency medical care.

So I urge support of this resolution recognizing modeling and simulation as a National Critical Technology.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, let me just conclude by saying I think this is our 30th bill with Mr. FEENEY's help out of the Science Committee. All have been bipartisan. All but two have been unanimous. This is another good piece of legislation.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, while nearly all Members of this body have benefited from the application of modeling and simulation, or M-and-S, technology in one way or another, I want to briefly describe what we are talking about when we discuss Modeling and Simulation technology. ''Modeling and Simulation'' simply refers to replicating a system on a smaller scale or on a computer for extensive analysis.

For example, we can test a new airplane in a wind tunnel without risking human life and without building full-scale airplanes. The benefits and applications of this technology are immediately obvious: we can learn about a system in a more cost-effective, timely, and safer manner than analyzing the real thing. And furthermore, we can simulate thousands of scenarios over and over again on a computer when it is too hazardous, expensive, or impossible to perform a real-world experiment.

So in short, M-and-S tools allow us to understand complex interactions that would otherwise be impossible to comprehend using other means. If modeling and simulation technology sounds like it has the promise to dramatically change the way we apply science in the world, the fact is, that is has already done so—and this resolution seeks to recognize the countless efforts of the professionals who have taken this technology and applied it to make the United States a safer and more prosperous Nation.

The impact of Modeling and Simulation technology is felt in the private sector, academia, government, and across all disciplines. M-and-S tools have streamlined the design and manufacturing of cars, homes, boats, and airplanes.

M-and-S software designed in Illinois is assisting automotive engineers to design engines that are more efficient while reducing emissions. M-and-S analysis is also used in the engineering of major roads, bridges, harbors, railways, and airports—all of which lead to increased transportation capacity and safety.

At the United States Joint Forces Command in the Fourth Congressional District in Virginia, M-and-S tools have accelerated the effectiveness of joint and interagency exercises run by the Command. One of their experimentation projects is to enhance our national security by running scenarios in an urban combat environment. Their goal is to provide ''lessons learned'' for our troops in theater before they encounter the same situation on the ground.

Because of these kinds of valuable contributions, this resolution honors modeling and simulation by recognizing it as a National Critical Technology. A National Critical Technology refers to those technologies that are essential to develop in order to ensure the long-term national security and economic prosperity of the United States. I have already mentioned how modeling and simulation has broadly contributed to our national security and the economic prosperity, but let me name a few specific examples:

During the Manhattan Project, it was early models and simulations that allowed scientists to a developed understanding of nuclear chain reactions that ultimately led to the end of World War II.

America's military have used simulators to train personnel for flying aircraft and ships, and now they use simulators to train soldiers and marines to detect roadside IEDs.

Additionally, in the past, medical malpractice insurance rates have included artificially high premiums because it was difficult to reduce the number of medical errors for certain medical procedures that were not routinely performed. Today, however, insurance discounts are being provided to anesthesiologists and obstetricians who include simulated procedures in their biennial training requirements.

I commend those that have used M-and-S tools to make great contributions to this country.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 487, which recognizes modeling and simulation as a national critical technology. I would like to thank my friend from Virginia's Fourth Congressional District and the chair of the Congressional Modeling and Simulation Caucus, Congressman RANDY FORBES, for introducing this important resolution.

Modeling and simulation has become an essential component in ensuring that we meet both the defense and domestic challenges of the 21st century. Modeling and simulation allows us to easily and effectively sharpen the tools, procedures, and decisions needed to address difficult and complex problems. This critical technology allows us to build and develop models of complex systems—whether a car, an airplane, an entire battlefield, or even a major city's evacuation plan—to see how certain actions will affect the end result. These simulations help us develop better and practical analogies of real world situations. With the growing international challenges of the 21st century, this technology is vital to the defense of our great Nation. Simulating battlefield conditions will sharpen the skills of the brave men and women serving in our armed forces.

Madam Speaker, the practical uses of modeling, analysis and simulation technology as a training tool are boundless. Military and airline pilots have been using this technology for decades. Congress should be interested in using this technology for homeland security, disaster preparedness, and other ways to benefit the public; the resolution before the House today ensures that this body is aware of how critical this technology is for our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to represent the people and businesses of the Third Congressional District of Virginia who are a part of this important and growing sector of Virginia's economy. In addition to our local military bases supporting the Joint Forces Center in Suffolk, our local colleges and universities and NASA Langley Research Center on the Virginia peninsula are engaged in applying people, tools and facilities to modeling, analysis and simulation technology. Hampton Roads is leading the way in modeling and simulation technology. The Virginia Modeling, Analysis and Simulation Center in Suffolk, Virginia, is a premier facility that is second to none.

The modeling and simulation industry is vital to the growing economy of Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Hampton Roads Congressional Delegation has a history of working together and we will continue to do so in promoting this important industry in this Congress. Using modeling and simulation technology in the fields of science, national defense, homeland security and disaster planning will better the lives of all Americans and make our great Nation safer.

Madam Speaker, I am glad that the House is considering this resolution today and I encourage all my colleagues to support this resolution and to learn more about this critical technology.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, in addition to formally recognizing modeling and simulation contributions, H. Res 487 urges Congress to continue to invest in critical science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM education—disciplines that are essential to the expansion of modeling and simulation technology. Previous Congresses, as well as this Congress, have demonstrated a deep commitment to furthering STEM education. Because the skills required for modeling and simulation develop over a long period of time—it is essential that we begin to develop these critical skills in our children now.

Already, academic programs for modeling and simulation have sprung up across the country, at places such as Texas A&M and at the Virginia Modeling and Simulation Center based out of Old Dominion University. There, nearly 100 modeling and simulation professionals seek new ways to apply this technology.

We must invest now rather than later, and I applaud the efforts of the Administration and this House towards that end. This investment is particularly valuable as other countries continue to produce more engineers than we graduate each year.

This resolution is also meant to bring to the attention of this body, that policy decisions made in Congress and in the Administration can either accelerate the implementation of this technology, or unnecessarily slow its growth. That's why for the past 2 years, leaders in modeling and simulation from government, academia, and the private sector from around the country have come together in Virginia to identify the key policy challenges that are affecting the modeling and simulation industry.

For example, since last year, there has been a prohibition in place that prevents the Department of Defense from purchasing any flight simulator using a services contract. Now, if that prohibition had been in place just one year earlier, the Army's Flight School Twenty One at Fort Rucker, Alabama, would not have had the chance to revolutionize the way the Army's future aviators train. Because the prohibition came into affect after the service contract was signed, the Army was able to incorporate modern simulations into the heart of the training curriculum. As lawmakers, we ought to be aware of these policies, how they came about, and whether they are still valid or have outlived their usefulness.

When we recognize a technology that has been instrumental to our Nation, it follows that we should also understand the workforce that is producing these accomplishments. The professionals who make up the modeling and simulation community are scientists, mathematicians, programmers, and analysts. And unfortunately, we do not know much about them in part because they do not fit neatly into any current category as defined by the Department of Labor. There is also no nationwide estimate of how large the modeling and simulation community is; or whether our education system is producing an adequately technical workforce. So the government's classification of occupational codes is another area where Federal policy impacts modeling and simulation technology.

As many of my colleagues know, the Department of Labor uses classification codes to identify and describe many occupations. The codes identify the projected job market, and the typical skills, education, and experience requirements. Particularly for occupations related to critical technologies such as modeling and simulation, it is important that we identify these details. With this information, we can learn if the number of technical graduates each year can match expected modeling and simulation job growth, and we can identify the economic impact this industry has had across the country.

Madam Speaker, as Members consider their vote on this measure today, I would encourage my colleagues to keep in mind how this technology can break some of the logjams that seem to know no solution. For instance,

medical errors persist even in the best hospitals. But, these errors could likely be reduced if we can train our medical professionals in situations that replicate the most common errors or scenarios without ever seeing a patient. Simulation can also extend the value of each defense dollar, which will only become more important as rising entitlement spending squeezes overall discretionary spending, which includes defense spending.

We can increase the opportunity for interagency cooperation by decreasing the financial and time costs associated with exposing department-long bureaucrats to other agencies. One way to do this is through simulated exercises and interagency education and training. Just five years ago, a large scale defense exercise was run with many personnel in real-time. It required 5 years, 14,000 personnel, and 250 million dollars.

This year, a recent interagency exercise at U.S. Joint Forces Command was conducted to practice responding to a natural and a man-made disaster. It required only 5 months, 140 personnel and 2 million dollars to develop. Madam Speaker, the price of many things that the government buys only goes up with time. But, with modeling and simulation, we can improve the value of each taxpayer's dollar by saving money on personnel costs, equipment, and time.

Modeling and Simulation also contributed to finding a solution to the concerns of nuclear testing. For a long time, there was a tension between wanting to have certainty in the reliability of our nuclear stockpile that at the time, was believed to only be achieved by live testing. But there were also concerns that more testing by the United States would negatively impact our nuclear nonproliferation efforts. Fortunately, an acceptable solution came in the form of modeling and simulation.

At the Government's Department of Energy national laboratories in California and New Mexico, modeling and simulation tools serve as a foundational element of the National Nuclear Security Administration's Stockpile Stewardship Program, which enables the President of the United States to certify the safety security and reliability of nuclear stockpile for more than 10 years without the use of live nuclear testing. So, we are able to have full certainty as to the readiness of our primary deterrent, while also demonstrating the Nation's commitment to nuclear nonproliferation.

Madam Speaker, we are at the tip of the iceberg as to what other issues modeling and simulation can address. I urge passage of this resolution that commends past modeling and simulation successes, and which presents a glimpse of the kinds of issues this House must address in the future to advance the benefits of this technology for the security and economy of this country.

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. GORDON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 487.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COLONEL CHARLES D. MAYNARD LOCK AND DAM

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 781) to redesignate Lock and Dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System near Redfield, Arkansas, authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act approved July 24, 1946, as the ''Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam''.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 781

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Colonel Charles D. Maynard, who served the Nation with distinction as an engineer officer in World War II and afterwards oversaw the massive buildup of work on the ''Arkansas River Project'' in the early 1960s which at the time was the largest civil works project ever undertaken by the Corps of Engineers while concurrently overseeing construction of Greers Ferry and Beaver Dams on the White River.

(2) Colonel Charles D. Maynard was assigned as district engineer of the Little Rock Engineer District for 3 years during which time he directed planning, design, and construction of 13 locks and dams of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation Project.

(3) Colonel Charles D. Maynard successfully met the challenging schedules set by Congress and the Administration while coordinating with a host of state and Federal agencies in Arkansas and Oklahoma.

(4) Colonel Charles D. Maynard served as Chairman and President of the Water Resources Association of America, President of the Arkansas Basin Association, member of the Arkansas Basin Coordinating Committee of the Arkansas Basin Development Association.

(5) Colonel Charles D. Maynard actively promoted development of waterborne transportation in Arkansas and was appointed by 3 governors to serve on the Arkansas Waterways Commission for 21 years.

(6) Colonel Charles D. Maynard provided Congressional testimony in support of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, Fourche Creek Flood Control Project, and Montgomery Point Lock and Dam on behalf of various Arkansas associations and committees, and was named as a member of the Arkansas River Hall of Fame.

(7) Colonel Charles D. Maynard, who died on October 22, 2005, served in numerous community and civic roles, including the United States Savings Bond Coordinator for Arkansas for 10 years, Campaign Chairman for the United Way of Pulaski County, Chairman Emeritus of Central Arkansas Radiation Treatment Center, and President of the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce.

(8) Colonel Charles D. Maynard was a dedicated citizen who served on a number of boards supporting his state and local community including Arkansas Arts Center, the Arkansas Symphony, and the Foundation Board of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

SEC. 2. LOCK AND DAM REDESIGNATION.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—Lock and Dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System near Redfield, Arkansas, authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act approved July 24, 1946, shall be known and redesignated as the ''Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam''.

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the lock and dam referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the ''Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days 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 Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 781, offered by my colleague, Mr. ROSS of Arkansas, to redesignate lock and dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System as the Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam. The bill has the support of the entire Arkansas delegation.

Colonel Maynard made an undeniable contribution to the State of Arkansas through his professional duties and social services. Educated at West Point, he was the district engineer of the Little Rock Engineer District for 3 years, where he oversaw the planning, design and construction of the 13 locks and dams on the McClellan-Kerr. At the time, this was the largest civil works project ever undertaken in the State of Arkansas.

To this day, the locks and dams provide inland waterway transportation for commerce and well-paying jobs for many of the residents of Arkansas. Billions of dollars in goods move through the State's ports each year.

Colonel Maynard was an integral connection between the project and Congress: he provided congressional testimony in support of McClellan-Kerr, and he consistently met the deadlines our body designated for the project.

Because of his work promoting waterborne transportation in Arkansas, Colonel Maynard was appointed by three separate Governors to serve on the Arkansas Waterways Commission. He served on the commission for 21 years.

His civil roles included a variety of leadership positions for charity groups to better our society and for groups such as the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce to help promote business in his community.

Although Colonel Maynard passed away October 22, 2005, he remains a symbol of how best to engineer our

civil works projects for the benefit of all. His memory could also be used to call attention to the vital role inland waterways have for our economy, and remind us of the improvements and necessary maintenance projects needed for our commerce on these rivers to thrive.

I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting H.R. 781.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the Arkansas River system provides navigation, flood protection, hydropower, water supply and recreation for millions of Americans. This body of water provides a 9-foot navigation channel that is almost 445 miles long and is controlled over this length by 17 locks and dams.

Madam Speaker, lock and dam No. 5, which this legislation would name after Colonel Charles Maynard, became operational in 1968. This is a vital piece of infrastructure where almost 9 million tons of commodities pass through it annually.

Prior to his work as district engineer in Little Rock, Arkansas, Colonel Maynard served in the Army in New Guinea and the Philippines during World War II and later supported the Berlin airlift as an engineer in charge of construction at Keflavik Field in Iceland.

Madam Speaker, Colonel Maynard oversaw many of the Army Corps of Engineers construction projects along the Arkansas River. Under his watch, Colonel Maynard directed the construction of 13 of the 17 locks along the river.

Due to his military education, management skills and World War II experience, he was uniquely qualified for his assignment as the Little Rock district engineer. This designation is an appropriate honor for Colonel Maynard's achievements and contributions.

I urge all Members to support H.R. 781.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to Mr. ROSS of Arkansas.

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 781. This legislation honors and recognizes the life and work of Colonel Charles D. Maynard by redesignating lock and dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System as the Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam.

□ 1615

I would like to first thank Chairman OBERSTAR and subcommittee Chairman JOHNSON, along with Ranking Member MICA and subcommittee Ranking Member BAKER and Mr. WESTMORELAND of Georgia for their support and assistance in moving this bill from the Transportation Committee to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives in a bipartisan manner.

I am also pleased that this legislation has received the support and cosponsorship of the entire Arkansas congressional delegation. I would like to personally thank Congressman JOHN BOOZMAN, a Republican; Congressmen VIC SNYDER and MARION BERRY, Democrats. The entire Arkansas delegation in a bipartisan manner have come together in this legislation.

Colonel Charles D. Maynard served our Nation with distinction as an engineer officer in World War II. Following the war, Colonel Maynard oversaw the Arkansas River Project in the early 1960s, which at the time was the most substantial and largest civil works project ever undertaken, ever undertaken, by Corps of Engineers. At the same time Colonel Maynard also oversaw the construction of Greers Ferry and Beaver Dams on the White River in Arkansas.

Colonel Maynard was also the Little Rock Corps District Engineer in charge of construction of all locks and dams in Arkansas from 1962 to 1965. During that time he directed planning, design, and construction of 13, 13, locks and dams of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation Project.

In addition to his work with the Corps, Colonel Maynard actively promoted the development of waterborne transportation in Arkansas and was appointed by three Governors to a prestigious position on the Arkansas Waterways Commission, where he served for 21 years. He also served as Chairman and President of the Water Resources Association of America, President of the Arkansas Basin Association, and he was a member of the Arkansas Basin Coordinating Committee.

As a member of the Arkansas River Hall of Fame, Colonel Maynard provided congressional testimony in support of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, the Fourche Creek Flood Control Project, and the Montgomery Point Lock and Dam on behalf of various Arkansas associations and committees.

In addition to his numerous accomplishments in waterways, Colonel Maynard was also a dedicated citizen who served in a variety of community and civic roles in the State of Arkansas. These included his service as the United States Savings Bond Coordinator for Arkansas for 10 years, the Campaign Chairman for the United Way of Pulaski County, the Chairman of Central Arkansas Radiation Treatment Center, and President of the Little Rock, Arkansas Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, Colonel Maynard's steadfast service on numerous boards and councils at the State and local level will never be forgotten. These include the Arkansas Arts Center, the Arkansas Symphony, and the Foundation Board of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

The life and work of Colonel Charles D. Maynard were immensely important to not only the State of Arkansas but to the entire Nation. This resolution will write into history Colonel Maynard's countless contributions. As such, I am proud to sponsor a resolution that commemorates his life's work and achievements by redesignating Lock and Dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System as the Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam. I urge my fellow colleagues to vote in favor of this worthwhile legislation today.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. 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 Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 781.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING UNITED PARCEL SERVICE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 375) honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 375

Whereas United Parcel Service (in this resolution referred to as ''UPS'') provides solutions that connect the flow of goods, funds, and information in the United States to more than 200 countries, including delivery service to every address in North America and Europe, through its expansive transportation network, thus truly synchronizing global commerce;

Whereas UPS was founded in 1907 as the American Messenger Company by James E. ''Jim'' Casey in Seattle, Washington, with $100 borrowed from a friend and has grown from a 2-person message delivery firm into a 427,000-plus employee global transportation and logistics corporation that moves nearly 15,000,000 packages through its network each business day;

Whereas Jim and his partner, Claude Ryan, focused on providing the best service and lowest rates to launch what would become the world's largest package delivery service;

Whereas the American Messenger Company acquired its first delivery car, a Model T Ford, in 1913 and operates today a vehicle fleet of almost 92,000 vehicles;

Whereas, in 1913, the American Messenger Company merged with competitor Evert ''Mac'' McCabe and selected the name Merchants Parcel Delivery;

Whereas, in 1919, Merchants Parcel Delivery made its first expansion beyond Seattle to Oakland, California, and adopted its present name, United Parcel Service;

Whereas, in 1929, UPS became the first package delivery company to provide air service and operates today the world's eighth largest airline;

Whereas, during the Second World War, UPS still continued to grow by expanding employment opportunities to, and capitalizing on the talents of, women in the workforce;

Whereas, in 1975, UPS forged the ''Golden Link'', becoming the first package delivery company to serve every address in the continental United States and began its first operations outside the United States in Ontario, Canada;

Whereas UPS continues to expand its role as a provider of transportation-based and supply chain services;

Whereas UPS has earned numerous awards for its outstanding business practices, recognizing the company's values and commitment to social responsibility and diversity;

Whereas the Environmental Protection Agency awarded UPS the Clean Air Excellence Award, citing UPS's alternative fuel program under which the UPS ''Green Fleet'' recently passed the 100,000,000 mile mark;

Whereas UPS plays a major philanthropic leadership role in the United States and has made significant contributions to numerous charitable organizations around the world;

Whereas, over the past 100 years, UPS has gone through many transformations, growing from a small messenger company to a leading provider of air, ocean, ground, and electronic services, while remaining true to its modest origins and commitment to customer service; and

Whereas UPS maintains its reputation for integrity, reliability, employee ownership, and customer service: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes United Parcel Service's role in the global transportation system as the world's largest package delivery company; and

(2) celebrates United Parcel Service's 100th anniversary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. 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 H. Res. 375.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 375, honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States.

This resolution, as introduced by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND), honors the 100th anniversary of the United Parcel Service and recognizes its role in our global transportation system.

Since its founding in 1907 by James E. ''Jim'' Casey and Claude Ryan in Seattle, Washington, with $100 borrowed from a friend, United Parcel Service has grown from a two-person foot and bike messenger service into a worldwide transportation and logistics corporation. Today UPS is the world's largest package delivery company, employing over 427,000 workers, utilizing approximately 92,000 vehicles and operating the world's eighth largest airline. UPS plays an integral role in the movement of goods in the constantly changing global economy, moving over 15 million packages through its network each business day. It is an important spoke in the global transportation wheel, connecting the flow of goods and information in the United States to more than 200 countries.

In 1929, UPS became the first package delivery company to provide air service. In 1975, it became the first package delivery company to serve every address in the continental USA.

UPS's contributions to our Nation go beyond simply transporting goods or providing logistics to our businesses. It has maintained its role as a leader in good business practices, with a commitment to social responsibility and diversity. It has also made a significant dedication to environmental stewardship through the UPS ''Green Fleet,'' which recently passed the 100 million mark. The company also plays an important philanthropic role in the United States and has made sizable contributions to numerous charitable organizations around the world.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 375.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 375, honoring the United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States, and all across this world.

It is increasingly difficult for businesses to survive in today's global economy, and I am proud to offer this resolution honoring UPS as a company that has not only survived but one that has continued to grow and prosper for 100 years not only in this country but all over the world.

In 1907, when Mr. James E. Casey borrowed $100 from a friend to start a delivery company, I am sure that it was impossible for him to envision what his hard work would become.

Whether it was purchasing his first delivery car in 1913, becoming the first package delivery company to provide air service in 1929, or using alternative fuels to power its fleet, UPS has continued to embrace technological advancements in order to better serve its customers.

Now, 100 years after its inception, UPS is a 427,000-employee global transportation corporation that moves nearly 15 million packages through its network each business day. While UPS is headquartered in my home State of Georgia, its presence is felt in every congressional district and all around the globe.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is fitting that we honor this tremendous achievement, and I urge all Members to support this resolution and recognize what brown has done for us.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I simply wanted to add that UPS also is very environmentally sensitive and uses natural gas in metropolitan areas.

I would move that we support this resolution.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 375, which honors the United Parcel Service, UPS, and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States. Of the 425,000 jobs that UPS provides to hard-working people across the globe, 16,000 of them are in my home State of New Jersey. Included in that number are the employees that work at the Ramapo Ridge Data Center in Mahwah, NJ, in my District, one of two data centers supporting UPS worldwide computer operations.

UPS has made it a priority to integrate itself into the local community and has been a magnet for jobs in a variety of positions; from the high-tech workers at the Mahwah Data Center to the uniformed delivery people we meet on a daily basis in offices across the country. UPS continues to actively recruit from the local colleges and universities in my district, with internship and co-op opportunities for students who are studying Computer Science, Information Systems, Industrial Engineering, and Mathematics.

UPS has also been recognized for its commitment to diversity. Twenty-nine percent of UPS's IT population is female, far higher than the IT population as a whole. In 2006, UPS was recognized as one of America's most supportive companies of both black and Hispanic engineering students by two independent surveys. Truly this is a company that has made a commitment to reach out to populations traditionally underrepresented in high-tech fields, and has continued to excel while doing so.

With more and more American jobs being created in the services industry, it is companies such as UPS that serve as a great example of how U.S. businesses are adapting to our changing economy. When the American Messenger Company acquired its first delivery car, a Ford Model T, in 1913, perhaps the founders could have envisioned the nearly 100,000 cars, vans, trucks, and motorcycles that today comprise the delivery fleet of UPS. But surely they could not have envisioned the 14.5 million page views that www.ups.com averages per day or the nearly 5,500 technology employees currently employed by UPS. As companies continue to adapt to the changing global economy, it is entirely appropriate that this House of Representatives recognize one such company that has not only adapted, but also stayed ahead of the curve for 100 years, while at the same time staying true to its original mission of delivering parcels from one to another.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Madam Speaker, this year we recognize the 100th Anniversary of the United Parcel Service, or UPS. UPS was founded in 1907 as the American Messenger Company by James E. Casey

in Seattle, Washington, with $100 borrowed from a friend. Since then, they have grown from a 2-person message delivery firm into a 427,000-plus employee global transportation and logistics corporation that moves nearly 15,000,000 packages through its network each business day.

The 4th Congressional District is home to the Oak Street Processing facility. This facility employs hundreds of hard-working individuals and is critical to UPS' Long Island operations. I am proud to have such an instrumental facility in my district. I want to thank the UPS employees from the Oak Street Facility and throughout the nation, for their continued service and dedication to our country''.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 375, Honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States.

I have a UPS facility in my district on Sweetwater Lane in Houston and I have visited the facility many times to speak with management and the employees who are represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. I even delivered packages with the UPS employees a few years ago on the Beltway 8 and Intercontinental Airport Route. Many of my constituents work at this UPS location and I am pleased that UPS continues to be a responsible employer and corporate citizen.

Many businesses have difficulties surviving over time, but UPS has stayed strong for 100 years. We appreciate their strong relationship with the local communities and the services they provide worldwide. I am pleased to honor UPS for their 100 years of service and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 375—Honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States—and the more than 1000 UPS drivers, managers and other employees in the Third District of Nebraska.

Founded in 1907, UPS has become an everyday sight for many of us. In Washington, DC it is not remarkable to see one of the big, brown trucks every day.

But for people in rural Nebraska, UPS is an invaluable resource. Rural delivery service—for many—is a life-line for homes far away from the local post office. UPS prides itself on delivery service to every address in North America and Europe, including areas where neighbors can be separated by miles of ranch and farmland.

I have had the honor of meeting with some UPS drivers, and I look forward to doing so again in the near future. Until then, I say "thank you" to all UPS employees and to "keep up the great work."

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. 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 Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 375, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 799) to reauthorize and improve the program authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 799

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 ''Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007''.

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS; MAXIMUM COMMISSION CONTRIBUTION.

(a) GRANTS AND OTHER ASSISTANCE.—Section 14321(a) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(A)(i) and inserting the following:

''(i) the amount of the grant shall not exceed—

''(I) 50 percent of administrative expenses;

''(II) at the discretion of the Commission, if the grant is to a local development district that has a charter or authority that includes the economic development of a county or a part of a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 75 percent of administrative expenses; or

''(III) at the discretion of the Commission, if the grant is to a local development district that has a charter or authority that includes the economic development of a county or a part of a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of administrative expenses;''; and

(2) by striking paragraph (2)(A) and inserting the following:

''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), of the cost of any activity eligible for financial assistance under this section, not more than—

''(i) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle;

''(ii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle; or

''(iii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this subtitle.''.

(b) DEMONSTRATION HEALTH PROJECTS.—Section 14502 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d)(2) and inserting the following:

''(2) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Grants under this section for the operation (including initial operating amounts and operating deficits, which include the cost of attracting, training, and retaining qualified personnel) of a demonstration health project, whether or not constructed with amounts authorized by this section, may be made for up to—

''(A) 50 percent of the cost of that operation;

''(B) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of the cost of that operation; or

''(C) in the case of a project to be carried out for a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of the cost of that operation.''; and

(2) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (1) by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2) and (3)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) AT-RISK COUNTIES.—The maximum Commission contribution for a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526 may be increased to the lesser of—

''(A) 70 percent; or

''(B) the maximum Federal contribution percentage authorized by this section.''.

(c) ASSISTANCE FOR PROPOSED LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS.—Section 14503 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking subsection (d)(1) and inserting the following:

''(1) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—A loan under subsection (b) for the cost of planning and obtaining financing (including the cost of preliminary surveys and analyses of market needs, preliminary site engineering and architectural fees, site options, application and mortgage commitment fees, legal fees, and construction loan fees and discounts) of a project described in that subsection may be made for up to—

''(A) 50 percent of that cost;

''(B) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of that cost; or

''(C) in the case of a project to be carried out for a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of that cost.''; and

(2) by striking subsection (e)(1) and inserting the following:

''(1) IN GENERAL.—A grant under this section for expenses incidental to planning and obtaining financing for a project under this section that the Secretary considers to be unrecoverable from the proceeds of a permanent loan made to finance the project shall—

''(A) not be made to an organization established for profit; and

''(B) except as provided in paragraph (2), not exceed—

''(i) 50 percent of those expenses;

''(ii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent of those expenses; or

''(iii) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent of those expenses.''.

(d) TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE.—Section 14504 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following:

''(b) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

''(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

''(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

''(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.''.

(e) ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE.—Section 14505 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (c) and inserting the following:

''(c) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

''(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

''(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

''(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.''.

(f) REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIPS.—Section 14506 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking subsection (d) and inserting the following:

''(d) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any activity eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

''(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

''(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

''(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.''.

(g) SUPPLEMENTS TO FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAMS.—Section 14507(g) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by striking ''paragraph (2)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (2) and (3)''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

''(3) AT-RISK COUNTIES.—The maximum Commission contribution for a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526 may be increased to 70 percent.''.

SEC. 3. ECONOMIC AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subchapter I of chapter 145 of subtitle IV of title 40, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 14508. Economic and energy development initiative

''(a) PROJECTS TO BE ASSISTED.—The Appalachian Regional Commission may provide technical assistance, make grants, enter into contracts, or otherwise provide amounts to persons or entities in the Appalachian region for projects—

''(1) to promote energy efficiency in the region to enhance its economic competitiveness;

''(2) to increase the use of renewable energy resources in the region to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity, and heat; and

''(3) to support the development of conventional energy resources in the region to produce alternative transportation fuels, electricity, and heat.

''(b) LIMITATION ON AVAILABLE AMOUNTS.—Of the cost of any project eligible for a grant under this section, not more than—

''(1) 50 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section;

''(2) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which a distressed county designation is in effect under section 14526, 80 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section; or

''(3) in the case of a project to be carried out in a county for which an at-risk county designation is in effect under section 14526, 70 percent may be provided from amounts appropriated to carry out this section.

''(c) SOURCES OF ASSISTANCE.—Assistance under this section may be provided from amounts made available to carry out this section in combination with amounts made available under other Federal programs or from any other source.

''(d) FEDERAL SHARE.—Notwithstanding any provision of law limiting the Federal share under any other Federal program, amounts made available to carry out this section may be used to increase that Federal share, as the Commission decides is appropriate.''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 145 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 14507 the following:

''14508. Economic and energy development initiative.''.

SEC. 4. DISTRESSED, AT-RISK, AND ECONOMICALLY STRONG COUNTIES.

(a) DESIGNATION OF AT-RISK COUNTIES.—Section 14526 of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the section heading by inserting ''**, at-risk,**'' after ''**Distressed**''; and

(2) in subsection (a)(1)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C);

(B) in subparagraph (A) by striking ''and'' at the end; and

(C) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

''(B) designate as 'at-risk counties' those counties in the Appalachian region that are most at risk of becoming economically distressed; and''.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The analysis for chapter 145 of such title is amended by striking the item relating to section 14526 and inserting the following:

''14526. Distressed, at-risk, and economically strong counties.''.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 14703(a) of title 40, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to amounts made available under section 14501, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Appalachian Regional Commission to carry out this subtitle (other than section 14508)—

''(1) $65,000,000 for fiscal year 2007;

''(2) $80,000,000 for fiscal year 2008;

''(3) $85,000,000 for fiscal year 2009;

''(4) $90,000,000 for fiscal year 2010; and

''(5) $95,000,000 for fiscal year 2011.''.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 14703(b) of such title is amended to read as follows:

''(b) ECONOMIC AND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.—In addition to amounts made available under section 14501, there is authorized to be appropriated to the Commission to carry out section 14508 $12,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011.''.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Section 14703(c) of such title is amended by striking ''subsection (a)'' and by inserting ''subsections (a) and (b)''.

(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Section 14703 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(d) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.—Funds approved by the Commission for a project in a State in the Appalachian region pursuant to congressional direction shall be derived from such State's portion of the Commission's allocation of appropriated amounts among the States.''.

SEC. 6. TERMINATION.

Section 14704 of title 40, United States Code, is amended by striking ''2006'' and inserting ''2011''.

SEC. 7. ADDITIONS TO APPALACHIAN REGION.

(a) KENTUCKY.—Section 14102(a)(1)(C) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by inserting ''Metcalfe,'' after ''Menifee,'';

(2) by inserting ''Nicholas,'' after ''Morgan,''; and

(3) by inserting ''Robertson,'' after ''Pulaski,''.

(b) OHIO.—Section 14102(a)(1)(H) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting ''Ashtabula,'' after ''Adams,'';

(2) by inserting ''Fayette,'' after ''Coshocton,'';

(3) by inserting ''Mahoning,'' after ''Lawrence,''; and

(4) by inserting ''Trumbull,'' after ''Scioto,''.

(c) TENNESSEE.—Section 14102(a)(1)(K) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting ''Giles,'' after ''Franklin,''; and

(2) by inserting ''Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln,'' after ''Knox,''.

(d) VIRGINIA.—Section 14102(a)(1)(L) of such title is amended—

(1) by inserting ''Henry,'' after ''Grayson,''; and

(2) by inserting ''Patrick,'' after ''Montgomery,''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. 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 materials on H.R. 799.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H.R. 799, as amended, the Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007, and thank Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for their hard work and leadership in helping to bring this bill to the floor.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC, strives to ensure the people and businesses of the Appalachian region have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and access to services necessary to compete in basic economic activities of the United States.

Since its inception in 1965, the commission has been highly effective in meeting the goals of its mission. There is no doubt that it has compiled an impressive record of accomplishment in creating economic opportunity in Appalachia. Just as it has done since its inception, the ARC has proven it provides a fair return, both socially and economically, for the Federal Government's investment in the people of Appalachia.

Consistent with the congressional leadership and interest in energy programs, H.R. 799 authorizes the ARC to

provide technical assistance, make grants, enter into contracts, or otherwise provide amounts in the Appalachian region for energy-efficient projects or projects to increase the use of renewable energy resources.

□ 1630

This bill also authorizes the creation of at-risk counties, and further outlines the percentage of funds for which these counties are eligible. The authorized amounts build on the funds authorized in Public Law 107–149 and adjust the annual amounts for inflation. The bill authorizes appropriation for the commission's programs and expenses through the fiscal year 2011.

H.R. 799, as amended, has strong bipartisan support, which acknowledges the ARC as a well-run and highly effective Federal/State partnership commission.

I urge the passage of H.R. 799, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, H.R. 799, as amended, reauthorizes and improves the Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC. The ARC has been a successful program for the last 40 years. It has helped reduce the Appalachian region's poverty rate. It has cut the infant mortality rate. It has increased the percentage of adults with a high school diploma. It has provided water and sewer services to a significant number of households and businesses and created new jobs.

H.R. 799, as amended, reauthorizes the ARC for 5 years. The bill includes a couple of very important reforms. It helps focus funding on distressed and at-risk counties, and it includes language that will deter earmarking of the program.

Currently, the ARC has four statutory designations which are determined by the unemployment rate, per capita income and the poverty rate of each ARC county. This bill creates an additional designation to assist counties that are at risk and don't fully qualify as distressed.

At-risk counties are fragile economies making it difficult to meet the 50 percent match rate to participate in the program. In many cases, at-risk counties are recently distressed and eligible for an 80 percent Federal match. The addition of the ''at-risk'' designation will fund projects in these counties up to 70 percent of the project cost as they continue the transition from the ''distressed'' to the ''transitional'' designation.

The ARC is viewed by most as a successful model for economic development. The ability to leverage a large amount of public and private funding makes the ARC a very valuable tool for economic development in Appalachia. We must ensure continuation of this successful program and further express our support for the hardworking people in the Appalachian region.

I would encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 799, as amended.

Madam Speaker, I would reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to our chairman of the committee, Mr. OBERSTAR of Minnesota.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentlewoman, the Chair of our Water Resources Subcommittee, for standing in and carrying on while I was actually returning from Appalachia. And I thank the gentleman from Missouri, our ranking member on the subcommittee, for his strong support of all of the issues before our committee, and particularly these matters today.

I was in Sunbury and Shamokin Dam in Pennsylvania with our colleague, Congressman CARNEY, in his portion of the Appalachian Regional Commission looking at the Economic Development Highway Program of ARC.

Well, it's a long stretch from Minnesota to Appalachia, but the Appalachian region is an area that I have been associated with legislatively since I started here in the Congress 44 years ago as clerk of the Subcommittee on Rivers and Harbors, to the Committee on Public Works, predecessor to our Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I was engaged then in the earliest stages of forming what we know today as the Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission. It was close on the heels of the designation by President John F. Kennedy of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr. to travel throughout the Appalachian region to assess the conditions of distress, to listen to the concerns of the communities throughout the 13-State region, and to provide him with a report and a road map on dealing with the needs of Appalachia.

When John F. Kennedy went into the region, he found a region of poverty, a region of desolation. It struck him as worse than anything he had seen; a region he described as exploited by the coal barons, neglected by government and laid bare by ravages of the boom-and-bust cycles of coal mining.

In President Kennedy's words: ''This is an area rich in potential. Its people are hardworking, intelligent, resourceful, capable of responding successfully to education and training. They are loyal to their homes, to their families, to their States and to their country.''

''The Appalachian region,'' he said, ''is well-endowed with potential water, mineral, forest and scenic resources. This region, properly developed and assisted by the Federal Government, can make a contribution to the Nation's well-being.''

That was in 1960. Following the report of Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., President Kennedy shaped what we know today as the legislation that created the Appalachian Regional Commission, engineered into law by then-President Lyndon Johnson, authored in the Senate by Senator Jennings Randolph, and many cosponsors in the House, including my predecessor John Blotnick. At the time that John F. Kennedy made those observations, the way up for most people in Appalachia was a bus ticket north to Detroit or Chicago.

The economy of Appalachia could well be described in those days as 80 acres and a mule. When I traveled as a staff member into the region and saw that people were living in the hard pan areas, where there was no ground filtration for the sewage they were discharging into the creeks and streams, and in many places, generations of dysentery, where people were drinking their own sewage.

The area needed highways, airports; it needed vocational training centers; it needed education systems; it needed health care centers; it needed the structure of what 150 years of neglect had denied that area. And through the establishment of the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Federal/State partnership that resulted from it, an area that in 1960, whose income amounted to 45 percent of the national average, today is up to 75 percent of the national average. Where homeownership was a luxury, it is now a reality. Where job creation was nonexistent, it has now returned to this area, fulfilling President Kennedy's promise that the region can make a contribution to the Nation's well-being. And so it did exceedingly well.

Over many years, there were efforts to kill Appalachia. I remember so vividly during a hearing that I conducted as Chair of the Economic Development Subcommittee many years ago that we held in eastern Kentucky and brought witnesses from throughout the region, including from Tennessee, and I remember Ms. Tilda Kemplan, director of a child resource center, testifying at our field hearing and saying, ''Gentlemen, when you go back to Washington, try not to look at that dollar and see George Washington, but look over the top of the dollar and see a child and see our future.'' And that is what Appalachia has done. The Appalachian Regional Commission has caused us to look over the top of the dollar and to see a child and to see the future of the region.

In another community we talked to members of the city council and the chamber of commerce. One of them said, very touchingly, ''Before the ARC, we were so far down we had to look up to see bottom, but now we see a future.'' And in another community in West Virginia, the mayor of the town took us to his small business. Congressman NICK RAHALL was along, this was his district. And as the mayor and businessman explaining his operation and the need for road, for airport, for rail transportation, describing the needs and the good things that had been accomplished so far with the ARC, I looked at the wall behind the cash

register, and there was a sign that read: ''God never put nobody in a place too small to grow.''

Appalachia has been growing, the counties throughout this region, growing and overcoming 150 years of neglect and decline; making investments, creating opportunities, building for the future. One of the reports about a decade ago by the commission, their annual report on progress, said: ''Halfway home and a long way to go.'' Well, there's still a long way to go, but the march forward has been much improved, vastly improved by the investments we have made in partnership with the States throughout this region.

Continuing the investments, as we have done in the SAFETEA–LU Appalachia Backbone Highway Program at $470 million a year, continuing with the more than $400 million over the 4 years of the authorization in this bill, we will continue that partnership with the States, the communities, the neighborhood, the people of the Appalachian region. It is an investment of which all America can be proud, and of which all America has benefited.

I thank the gentleman from Missouri, and, heck, my colleagues on the Republican side of the committee. Throughout this whole initiative from the 1960s, this has been a totally bipartisan effort. And I recall, especially during the Reagan years when the Reagan administration was proposing to abolish the ARC and Congressman HAL ROGERS, the former chairman of the Commerce Subcommittee of appropriations, said, ''We're not going to let them wear us down. We're going to proceed. We're going to prevail. We have prevailed. Appalachia prevails. And America prevails with it.''

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 799, a bipartisan bill to improve the programs authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965 (P.L. 89–4) and reauthorize the Appalachian Regional Commission (''ARC'') for 5 years through FY 2011.

The Appalachian Regional Commission was created to address economic issues and social problems of the Appalachian region as a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society program. Historically, the Appalachian region has faced high levels of poverty and economic distress resulting from geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure.

As a regional economic development agency, ARC supports the development of Appalachia's economy and critical infrastructure to provide a climate for industry growth and job creation. ARC programs affect 406 counties located in 13 states, including all of West Virginia, and parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The Appalachian region covers nearly 200,000 square miles and contains approximately 22 million people. Currently, of the 406 counties included in the ARC, 114 are considered to be distressed counties.

Since its creation in 1965, ARC has administered a variety of programs to aid in the advancement of the region, including the creation of a highway system, enhancements in education and job training, and the development of water and sewer systems. ARC's funding and projects have contributed significantly to employment, health, and general economic development improvements in the region.

Because of its efficiencies in decision-making and service delivery, ARC served as a model for the Delta Regional Authority. ARC is successful because it responds to identified and agreed upon needs, and is extremely flexible in its approach. According to research conducted by Brandow Co. and the Economic Development Research Group, three fourths of ARC infrastructure projects with specific business or job-related goals met or exceeded formal projections. This is a very robust figure.

H.R. 799 builds on more than four decades of economic development successes by providing additional, much-needed Federal investment in the region. The bill allows ARC to continue its economic development activities using such tools as the telecommunication and technology initiative, and the entrepreneurship initiation to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Appalachia. Further, the bill provides authority for the Commission to make technical assistance grants for energy efficient projects or projects to increase the use of renewable energy resources. This bill also authorizes the designation of "at risk" counties, which are counties in the Appalachian region that are most at risk of becoming economically distressed, and identifies the percentage of funds for which these counties are eligible.

ARC's authorization expired at the end of FY 2006. During the 109th Congress, the Committee's bipartisan leadership introduced H.R. 5812, a bill reauthorizing ARC through FY 2011. Although the Senate passed S. 2832 to reauthorize the ARC, the Senate-passed bill did not include the anti-earmarking provision of H.R. 5812. The House did not pass S. 2832 and no further action was taken on H.R. 5812. This bill includes the anti-earmarking provision.

I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the chairman of the committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, for his remarks. They are very well put.

I would now like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE).

Mr. LATOURETTE. To the distinguished chairman of our full committee, I just want you to know how well your staff is taking care of you today. As we were calling up the bill, knowing you were traveling back, I didn't know you were coming from Appalachia, but Mr. McCarragher came over and said, ''Could you talk as long as possible so we can get the chairman back here?'' And now I don't have to do that, so I don't think I will need the full 5 minutes.

I do want to remark on the ARC, Madam Speaker. No one can stand up and say that the vision of John F. Kennedy implemented by legislation in 1965 by Lyndon Johnson has not been a wonderful success in dealing with the abject poverty of the Appalachian region.

The chairman rightly talked about the infrastructure part of our committee's assignments. But one of my favorite hearings, when I had the pleasure of being the chairman of the subcommittee, is when the ARC stakeholders would come in and talk to the Republicans and Democrats on the subcommittee. And aside from industrial parks, aside from roads, aside from bridges, aside from safe drinking water, they beamed with pride about how their graduation rates had improved and how the young people in their region were now taking pride in the education they were receiving, and they were graduating from high school at record numbers, something that would not have happened had it not been for the ARC.

I came to the floor this afternoon to specifically thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. OBERSTAR, and also the chairman of the subcommittee, Ms. HOLMES NORTON, together with Mr. GRAVES and Mr. MICA. One of John F. Kennedy's most oft quoted quotes is: ''A rising tide lifts all boats.'' And so Congressman TIM RYAN and I looked around and we saw, boy, everybody around us, to the east, to the south, to the west, seems to have participated wonderfully well in the Appalachian Regional Commission. And if you put a map of the Midwestern United States up, there's only a few little white squares, and they are regions that Congressman RYAN and I represent, Ashtabula, Trumbull and Mahoning County. We had a discussion with Chairman OBERSTAR during the course of the markup of this legislation, and it seems that Congressman RYAN and I weren't the only ones interested in this. And as a result of those discussions, Chairman OBERSTAR has added 13 additional counties to the purview of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

So I came down today, Madam Speaker, to thank the chairman for working with us. And I firmly believe that the addition of these three counties in Ohio, together with the 10 counties located throughout the region, are going to permit our people in transitional counties to benefit the same way as other counties have benefited since 1965.

□ 1645

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) for closing remarks.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciate the remarks of the gentleman from Ohio. He did great service, Madam Speaker, during his chairmanship of the Economic Development Subcommittee in service to the needs of the Appalachian Regional Commission, the ARC, and the Federal Economic Development Administration programs throughout the country. Adding these counties is an appropriate and necessary step to help lift the region further toward the future of continued economic growth. I was very touched by the gentleman's remarks

about education and the increase in education rights. He spoke well and rightly.

I do want to emphasize for the record, though, that included among all the many beneficial provisions of this bill is an important limitation on earmarking of funds within the ARC. In the past, and it has usually happened in conference, but also occasionally in the House appropriations bill, funds have been earmarked for one or another project which has undercut the effectiveness of the Federal-State partnership and the authenticity of the grass-roots up process of project designation, development and implementation. Using the appropriations process to direct funds has disadvantaged the other regions, of the other States within the region, and has devalued the funding that Congress has appropriated. More importantly, it devalues the Federal, State, and local partnership, the very effective grass-roots up process of project selection within Appalachia. It says your judgment doesn't count. We know better. The authenticity and effectiveness of the ARC program derives exactly from its grass-roots initiative.

So I was very insistent in the last Congress on finding a means by which we could thwart the earmarking. We have it in this bill. Our Senate counterparts have concurred that they want to follow this procedure. It will inure to the benefit of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I am today in support of H.R. 799, the Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007. This long overdue legislation continues to promote every one of the southern West Virginia counties I represent, and indeed the entire State of West Virginia, as it is the only State which lies entirely within ARC jurisdiction.

"A rising tide," President Kennedy told us, "lifts all boats." And so one of President Kennedy's legacies was created in 1965 with a unique mission to serve a unique part of the Nation, the Appalachian region.

Historically, the counties of Appalachia have "faced high levels of poverty and economic distress resulting from geographic isolation and inadequate infrastructure."

It was with these concerns in mind that ARC was created and it is these concerns ARC has been addressing vigorously for the past 40 years.

Take for example the area of transportation, a major focus for ARC. ARC was developed, in part, because of the severe isolation experienced in Appalachia and that in order to develop Appalachia and give its people an opportunity to compete, a system of highways was needed. Enter the Appalachian Development Highway System, which was created to serve the transportation needs of Appalachian residents by assisting in the construction of highways so critically needed by Appalachian communities for economic growth and development.

The ADHS now encompasses over 3,000 miles of Appalachian highways and nearly 85 percent of those roads are complete or under construction. The ADHS is truly a success story for ARC and all of Appalachia. Despite the President's recent budget, which requests eliminating funding for the Appalachian Development Highway System, it is my strong conviction that this program be continued at the agreed upon level set forth in SAFETEA–LU.

Before I leave this subject of transportation and the critical value of rural America's transportation network to our urban brothers and sisters, it is my sincere hope that rural America's voice will be loud and clear when it comes to funding schemes that would punish rural commuters and citizens who are forced by geography to drive long distances each day to and from their employment. It is an issue critical to the completion and maintenance of ARC development highways network.

And while a major focus of ARC remains on highways and Appalachian transportation infrastructure, as the times have changed so has ARC.

As much of the United States has been able to take advantage of the technological boom of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, Appalachia once again is in danger of being left behind and unable to compete in the global marketplace.

In the most recent FCC data on high-speed connections for Internet access, released on January 31, 2007, you can track the Appalachian mountain range by just how spotty the provider coverage is on the FCC's provider map. In fact, in West Virginia it is significantly below the average in broadband use nationwide.

Again, ARC is there to offer significant support, bringing broadband access to our communities, which is essential to leveling the playing field and giving our communities an opportunity to compete. Schools, businesses, local governments and individual homes all have benefited from ARC involvement in the expansion of broadband access in Appalachia, and continue to do so.

I have been working with ARC, private telecommunications companies and local economic development leaders to bring broadband technology into southern West Virginia. For example, through the E-commerce training initiatives being offered by ARC and others we are working to connect local small businesses to broadband, opening doors to Internet sales and services that just weren't there a couple of years ago.

It is ARC's ability to serve its mission by adapting its actions to fit the times that makes ARC such an invaluable resource to Appalachia and the Nation. From the Appalachian Development Highway System to the E-commerce and broadband initiatives, ARC continues to serve its mission by advocating for and partnering with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life.

I am also glad to see the integrity of ARC programs kept in tact by disallowing the use of earmarks in this legislation. I believe adoption of this provision is critical and will benefit all ARC member-states and the long-term viability of ARC itself. Additionally, I am pleased to see the bi-partisan support for this program which was displayed by the rejection of attempts to cut funding for it in the recent House passed FY08 Energy and Water Appropriations legislation.

I applaud the efforts of Federal Co-Chair Anne Pope who, as a native daughter of Appalachia, executes so well the mission of ARC in each of Appalachia's communities. I have said this before and am happy to do so again on the record, Anne is one of the finest Federal Co-Chairs to ever serve the people of Appalachia and I look forward to our continued strong relationship serving the needs of southern West Virginians, together.

I strongly support ARC, its mission and the incredibly successful initiatives it has undertaken to better the lives of the people of Appalachia and West Virginia.

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 799, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. PEARCE. 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 motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HILL) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3043, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110–235) on the resolution (H. Res. 547) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON H.R. 2547, FDIC ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the ordering of the yeas and nays be vacated with respect to the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 2547, as amended, to the end that the Chair put the question de novo.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIRES) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2547, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

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:

H.R. 1980, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 1982, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 799, 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.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1980, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1980.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 350, nays 49, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 630]

YEAS—350

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Cannon
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carney
Carson
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Drake
Dreier
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastert
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Manzullo
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—49

Akin
Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Blackburn
Burton (IN)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Culberson
Deal (GA)
Doolittle
Duncan
Feeney
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Hensarling
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
King (IA)
Lamborn
Marchant
Miller (FL)
Paul
Pence
Petri
Poe
Rohrabacher
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Souder
Stearns
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wilson (SC)

NOT VOTING—32

Boucher
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Carnahan
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Davis, Jo Ann
Fortenberry
Fossella
Gallegly
Gutierrez
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Inglis (SC)
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Kagen
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
McKeon
Meek (FL)
Myrick
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Rangel
Rush
Simpson
Tancredo
Tiahrt
Towns

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1859

Messrs. BARTON of Texas, GINGREY, SAM JOHNSON of Texas and POE changed their votes from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Mr. DEFAZIO changed his vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RURAL HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1982, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1982, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 350, nays 49, not voting 32, as follows:

[Roll No. 631]

YEAS—350

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blumenauer
Blunt

Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Cannon
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Drake
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gohmert
Gonzalez
Gordon
Granger
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hall (TX)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Herger
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (NC)
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Marchant
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (CA)
McCarthy (NY)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Neugebauer
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (GA)
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Ryan (WI)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Souder
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Thornberry
Tiberi
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wolf
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—49

Bachmann
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Blackburn
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Culberson
Deal (GA)
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Feeney
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Goode
Goodlatte
Hastert
Hensarling
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
King (IA)
Lamborn
Manzullo
Miller (FL)
Paul
Pence
Petri
Poe
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Stearns
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wilson (SC)
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—32

Akin
Boucher
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Davis, Jo Ann
Fortenberry
Fossella
Gallegly
Gutierrez
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Kagen
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
McKeon
Meek (FL)
Myrick
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Rangel
Rush
Simpson
Tancredo
Tiahrt
Towns
Woolsey

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain in the vote.

□ 1906

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, on H.R. 1980, and H.R. 1982. I was unavoidably detained by transportation delay. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 799, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 799, as amended.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 332, nays 70, not voting 29, as follows:

[Roll No. 632]

YEAS—332

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Aderholt
Alexander
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Baker
Baldwin
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blumenauer
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boren
Boswell
Boustany
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Brady (TX)
Braley (IA)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Calvert
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Cole (OK)
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Lincoln
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Drake
Duncan
Edwards
Ehlers
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
English (PA)
Eshoo
Etheridge
Everett
Fallin
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Forbes
Fortenberry
Frank (MA)
Frelinghuysen
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gonzalez
Goode
Goodlatte
Gordon
Graves
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Hunter
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Johnson, Sam
Jones (OH)
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Keller
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lucas
Lynch
Mack
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McDermott
McGovern
McHenry
McHugh
McIntyre
McMorris Rodgers
McNerney
McNulty
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Mica
Michaud
Miller (MI)
Miller (NC)
Miller, Gary
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (KS)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Musgrave
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Nunes
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Saxton
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schmidt
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuler
Shuster
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)

Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sullivan
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tiberi
Tierney
Turner
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wamp
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Westmoreland
Wexler
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—70

Akin
Barrett (SC)
Barton (TX)
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Blunt
Boehner
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Carter
Chabot
Coble
Conaway
Culberson
Doolittle
Dreier
Feeney
Flake
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gohmert
Granger
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jones (NC)
Jordan
King (IA)
Lamborn
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
Miller (FL)
Neugebauer
Paul
Pence
Petri
Poe
Price (GA)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Thornberry
Upton
Walberg
Weldon (FL)
Wilson (SC)

NOT VOTING—29

Boucher
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Crenshaw
Cubin
Cuellar
Davis, Jo Ann
Fossella
Gallegly
Gutierrez
Hinchey
Hoekstra
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Kagen
Kingston
Kucinich
Lipinski
McKeon
Meek (FL)
Myrick
Peterson (PA)
Pryce (OH)
Rangel
Rush
Simpson
Tancredo
Tiahrt
Towns

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised 2 minutes remain.

□ 1914

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, REPUBLICAN LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN A. BOEHNER, Republican Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
July 16, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to section 703c of the Public Interest Declassification Board, 50 U.S.C. 435 note, I have agreed to reappoint the Honorable David Skaggs to the Public Interest Declassification Board as the Minority Leader appointment. As previously agreed, because of the change in Congress and the presumed statutory intent of the Board, Mr. Skaggs has requested that he continue serving in this capacity, with the understanding that he will resign the position effective June 5, 2009. As such, I am pleased to make this appointment.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Republican Leader.

□ 1915

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, REPUBLICAN LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN A. BOEHNER, Republican Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
July 12, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to The National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 955(b) note), I am pleased to appoint the Honorable Pat Tiberi of Ohio to the National Council on the Arts.

Mr. Tiberi has expressed interest in serving in this capacity and I am pleased to fulfill his request.

Sincerely,

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Republican Leader.

WE NEED TO SUPPORT PAKISTAN

(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, our ally Pakistan is facing a difficult challenge. For those of us who believe that the region that includes Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan is one of our most strategic and Pakistan one of our most important, we want free elections and human rights. But now, we can see the light.

Pakistan is losing thousands of Pakistani troops into the region between Afghanistan and Pakistan in order to maintain the protection against the NATO troops. It is imperative that we engage Pakistan, support Pakistan and help them as they begin to try and resolve the crisis of Taliban.

Many criticize the agreement, but now we can see what happens when that agreement is declared dead by the Taliban. It is important that we work with Pakistan, see the light, stop the accusations and sit down to resolve the best, a safe and secure manner for the U.S. troops, the NATO troops and the Pakistani troops.

The alliance and friendship between the United States and Pakistan is important. We must find ways to accommodate that friendship to make it work for Pakistan and the United States and the United States military and the Pakistani Army.

HEALTH DISPARITIES AND SCHIP

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

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of increasing funding for the SCHIP program and also to address health care disparities in my State of Louisiana.

In 2004, the number of poor children living in Louisiana was 343,256, or 30 percent of all children in our State. Forty-seven percent of all African American children were listed as poor children, 26 percent of American Indian children, 23 percent of Asian children and 24 percent Latinos were listed as poor in my State. Of those 343,256 poor children, only 91,000 are covered by SCHIP, or as we call it in our State, LASCHIP.

After the storm, coverage for those originally enrolled in the Louisiana SCHIP program was not transferred across State lives, leaving many of the 251,000 children and adults who evacuated to other places without access to the health care they desperately need.

As former President Nelson Mandela said, ''There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.''

I hope this House will remember that as we deal with the SCHIP funding program this time around.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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.)

MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS OPERATE MARIJUANA PLANTATIONS IN AMERICA

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, earlier today I addressed this House and discussed how the Zetas drug cartel in Mexico has made it known it will hunt down journalists that report on the violent drug cartels in Mexico. This group of former Mexican military officers reportedly will track these reporters down even when they flee to the United States for safety. All of this because these journalists publish reports on the violent cross-border drug trade.

Tonight, I wish to discuss how these same outlaw Mexican drug cartels are operating marijuana plantations on public lands, not public lands in Mexico, but on public lands in the United States.

According to news reports, these plant plantations are in California, Arizona, Hawaii, West Virginia, Oregon, Tennessee and Kentucky, and account for 80 to 90 percent of all marijuana plantation production in the United States.

Law enforcement officials say that the drug cartels employ heavily armed bandits to guard these fields and they have superior fire power and surveillance equipment over American law enforcement agents.

The drug thugs destroy native vegetation and kill off all of the wildlife on the land so they can plant their marijuana crops. The cartels also use dangerous pesticides and fertilizers on the land that destroy the environment. Insultingly, all of this is occurring on American Federal lands.

There is more. The Washington Times reports today that ''campers, fishermen, hikers and forest and park officials are being intimidated, threatened or assaulted when they come near Mexican-run marijuana'' plantations on American soil, and that ''all this plant growing produces a street value of $6.7 billion.''

The Union newspaper from Nevada states, ''These American marijuana gardens are guarded by Mexican nationals, and the traffickers use the profits from pot sales to finance large methamphetamine labs in Mexico and the United States.''

Mr. Speaker, it seems that no public land is safe. Even California's Sequoia National Forest has been attacked by these drug cartels. The Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, John Walters, said, ''Mexican drug cartels are turning our national parks into centers of international drug production and trafficking. Public lands are being held hostage by illegal drug traffickers.''

Mr. Speaker, numerous law enforcement personnel, State, local and Federal, are attempting to retake our Federal and public lands from these drug cartel invaders. Some progress is reported, but the battle for our land goes forward.

We cannot allow these land grabbing, environmentally hazardous drug terrorists to seize America's national forests and national parks. These outlaws cannot be allowed to camp in our parks and swim in the profits from marijuana plantations. They should be tracked down, arrested, prosecuted, and put in jail.

We need to seize all their money from whatever financial institutions they try to hide it in and use the money to restore our national parks, the way they were before the drug invaders arrived.

We need to make it more difficult for them to operate here by actually securing the southern border, something that Homeland Security has yet to accomplish. Right now, security along our southern border is a glittering illusion.

Our national parks and forests are worth fighting for, and rather than journalists, campers, fishermen, hunters, and park rangers being afraid of these drug cartels like the Zetas, these outlaw drug gangs should be afraid of our relentless determination to take our land back.

And that's just the way it is.

ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TWA FLIGHT 800 DISASTER

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

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise on the solemn occasion of the 11th anniversary of the crash of TWA Flight 800. Many Americans remember where they were when they heard the shocking and tragic news about Flight 800 when it crashed off the southern shore of Long Island 11 years ago tomorrow, on the evening of July 17, 1996, claiming the lives of all 230 passengers and crew on board.

The event remains one of the worst air disasters in history and led to one of the most costly and extended investigations to date. Today, that loss is still felt by hundreds of families whose loved ones perished but are remembered by the breathtaking monument to their lives that extends along the grounds of East Moriches, Long Island, overlooking the waters of the Atlantic Ocean where the plane fell.

Tomorrow, we honor the memory of those who perished, just moments after taking off from JFK International Airport bound for Paris. Some of the victims were on their way home; many were high school students on the first leg of an international field trip; and some were on the way to visit loved ones.

Just as the families who lost their loved ones to the crash deserve to be remembered, so do each of Long Island's emergency personnel, volunteers and neighbors who selflessly responded to the crash and who worked tirelessly over the next several days and weeks following the disaster to assist with the search and recovery efforts.

Like other challenging times our Nation has faced, the reaction to the Flight 800 catastrophe brought out the best, not only among my constituents, but in so many other areas in the surrounding towns, counties and States across the Northeast who joined in helping my community recover from its most horrific tragedy.

Throughout their grief and despite the unimaginable shock, the families of the victims worked tirelessly to build a permanent memorial with the help of Navy Seabees and thousands of dedicated local and building trade union members. The solemn monument serves as a constant reminder of our tremendous loss 11 years ago tomorrow.

Last year, it was my honor and privilege to attend the dedication of the memorial completed at Smith Point County Park just before the 10th anniversary of the crash.

The centerpiece of this breathtaking and poignant memorial is a black granite sculpture called ''The Light.'' It was designed by Henry Seaman, whose cousin died in the crash. The monument offers some measure of closure to everyone who was affected by this terrible tragedy.

The memory of the passengers of Flight 800 lives on because of the continued work of people like Henry's brother, John Seaman, who is President of the Families of Flight 800 Association and among the memorial's most passionate and hardworking advocates.

In the 11 years since Flight 800, hundreds of thousands of people have visited the park in an acknowledgment of a shared sorrow for those who died. The monument ensures that future generations can do the same.

As we recognize the 11th anniversary of the Flight 800 disaster, it is important for us to take stock in the progress achieved since 1996 to prevent air disasters. We have made some great strides in aviation safety, particularly with design upgrades for passenger and cargo aircraft planes.

In particular, ongoing research and development of ''inerting'' technology will help to mitigate the vulnerability of aircraft fuel tanks to flammability, the underlying cause of the Flight 800 crash.

In fact, the crash was likely caused by a spark from a short-circuit in the Boeing 747's wiring that ignited the tank's volatile vapors. Although this was determined years ago and we know how to prevent similar disasters, we still have not required technology upgrades to protect passengers against another tragedy like the one witnessed 10 years ago.

To date, however, the Federal Aviation Administration has delayed taking on this challenge and has declined to work with the industry to implement a final FAA directive that would protect every air traveler with existing technology.

We still don't have the mandate for change. That is why I introduced the Transport Aircraft Fuel Tank Safety Act, which requires the FAA to retrofit all planes with new technology and to increase safety. I am pleased to report that the pending FAA reauthorization bill, which was recently passed by the House Transportation Committee, of which I am a member, includes a similar provision.

Senator SCHUMER is sponsoring a companion measure and is working with his colleagues on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee to move this legislation.

I am hopeful that my colleagues here in the Congress will work with me to bring an end to this delay. We have taken significant steps towards maintaining the memory of Flight 800, but we should also ensure that we don't allow this disaster to repeat itself.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to once again offer my deepest condolences to

the surviving families and friends of the victims of Flight 800 and encourage my colleagues to join me in commending each of them for the grace and dignity with which they have handled unspeakable pain.

INVESTIGATING THE PROSECUTION OF FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

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. Mr. Speaker, today is day 181st day of incarceration for two U.S. Border Patrol agents.

Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas. For almost a year, thousands of American citizens and dozens of Members of Congress have asked President Bush to pardon these agents. Many Americans are outraged by the President's decision to commute the sentence of White House aid Scooter Libby, while at the same time he refuses to pardon Border Patrol Agents Ramos and Compean.

Scooter Libby, an attorney who understands the laws of this country and should know right from wrong was convicted of perjury, obstruction of justice and lying to investigators. Mr. Libby, who should have served his sentence, did not spend one day in prison.

Yet two Border Patrol agents with exemplary records who were doing their duty to protect the American people from an illegal alien drug smuggler are serving 11 and 12 years, respectively, in prison. By attempting to apprehend an illegal alien drug smuggler, these agents were enforcing our laws, not breaking the laws. There are legitimate legal questions about how this prosecution was initiated and how the U.S. Attorney's Office proceeded in this case.

I am extremely pleased that Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN will be presiding over a full committee hearing tomorrow to examine the details of this case. This hearing will provide U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton an opportunity to explain to the Senate Judiciary Committee and to the American people why this U.S. Attorney's Office in western Texas chose to go after law enforcement officers while protecting illegal aliens who committed crimes and gave the illegal alien immunity to testify against the border agents.

I want to thank Senator FEINSTEIN for her interest in this case and for her leadership in holding hearings to look into this injustice.

I am also grateful to Chairman JOHN CONYERS, who I hope will hold a similar hearing on the House side sometime this fall.

Before I close, I want to say to the families of Border Patrol Agents Compean and Ramos that we, the American people, will not forget your husbands, your fathers, your brothers, and we will do everything we can to see that justice will prevail over an injustice.

NO MORE ''STAY THE COURSE''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, the President continues to ask this Congress and the American people to ''stay the course'' in Iraq. Well, Mr. President, today the American people and the Congress have said ''no more.''

Today I add my voice once again to the growing number of retired military generals, the Iraq Study Group, and untold thousands of rank and file on the front lines who were calling for a new direction in Iraq. The success of our military depends on a sound strategy. Yet instead of fighting the terrorists in the mountains of Afghanistan, our armed forces are overextended after 4 years of refereeing a civil war in the sands of Iraq.

The President's escalation of this war, his so-called surge, is not working. That much is clear. Since the escalation of this war 6 months ago, more than 25,000 troops have been sent to Iraq, 600 more U.S. soldiers have died, and more than 3,000 troops have been wounded. Countless thousands of Iraqis are dead, and today the violence in Iraq is at an all-time high. Those are facts that no one can deny.

Our troops have performed heroically in Iraq, but the Iraqi Government has failed to meet any, any of the benchmarks endorsed by the President in January. Political reconciliation within Iraq is nonexistent. A change of course is long overdue.

The time has come for the United States to responsibly redeploy our troops from Iraq and to refocus our efforts on protecting Americans from terrorism. The time has come for Iraqis to take primary responsibility for their country and for their security.

Let me be clear on one additional point. Democrats support the troops.

As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I personally have consistently voted to fund our troops and to provide our soldiers in the line of fire with the resources that they need. I do this because our brave servicemen and women are not risking their lives each and every day for one political party over another. They are risking their lives for America.

Our Nation owes our troops a strategy that is worthy of their sacrifice. But ''stay the course'' is not that strategy. It is a slogan that continues to fail them.

No, Mr. Speaker, if we really want to support our troops, it is time to get them out of Iraq and redeploy them to other areas where they can fight the terrorists who have attacked and who continue to threaten our Nation. That's where the war on terror should be waged.

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

SCHIP REAUTHORIZATION AND HEALTH DISPARITIES

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the reauthorization and expansion of the State Children's Health Insurance Program or SCHIP, our Nation's health care safety net for low-income, uninsured children.

We are at a critical juncture in our Nation's health care crisis. An estimated 46 million Americans are uninsured. Approximately 18,000 people die each year in this country as a direct consequence of being uninsured. Sadly, many of the victims are innocent children. No fewer than 9 million American children are without health insurance, and they are suffering as a result.

Uninsured children, like uninsured adults, are less likely to have access to early and preventive care, setting them up for a lifetime of health problems that may have been avoided if caught today. Far too many of our children are going to the emergency room because we have failed to let them into the doctor's office.

This is immoral, but it is also uneconomical. Preventive health care services are cheaper than disease management and trauma care. By denying our citizenry the former, we are paying a premium for the latter.

The President has ignored the potential cost savings, arguing, instead, that an expanded SCHIP program would move children off of private insurance, but that is simply not the case. The vast majority of children who would be covered by this bill come from families with less than $33,200 for a family of three. These families do not have the luxury of choosing private insurance over the public benefit. For them, it is public coverage or nothing.

We have a moral obligation to ensure that our children have access to health care. Our health care system produces infant mortality rates and incidences

of health disparities far greater than other nations in the industrialized world. We know statistically that racial and ethnic minorities suffer disproportionately from poor health and die prematurely. More than 30 years after the national embarrassment of Tuskegee Syphilis Experience, our people are still being denied access to the best medical system in the world.

This trend recently played out in my home State in Maryland in an incident that I still find difficult to comprehend. In February, a 12-year-old African American boy named Deamonte Driver died when an untreated tooth infection spread to his brain. A routine dental checkup costing about $40 might have saved his life. But Deamonte was poor and homeless, and he did not have access to a dentist.

Deamonte's case was rare and extreme, but he is by no means alone in his suffering. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that dental disease is the single-most chronic childhood disease in this country. It chills the conscience to think of how one young boy's life was cut short by the failure of our health care system, and millions of others continue to suffer.

We have a moral obligation in the memory of Deamonte to fix this problem now. This is why I have consistently advocated for a strong SCHIP bill that expands coverage to 6 million of our Nation's poorest children and guarantees them dental coverage.

I was discouraged to see that the first version of the bill from the Senate Finance Committee included only $35 million in additional funding and did not include mandatory dental benefit. As a Washington Post editorial board recently noted, memories are sometimes short here in Washington. I realize the current budgetary constraints make this process all the more contentious; however, these are times that require decisive leadership. I am hopeful that in the House we will be able to find funding to expand the program by $50 million while working with our Senate colleagues to negotiate a strong bill.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this vitally important legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York 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 Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

COMMIT TO FULLY FUND RESEARCH

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise to address the continuing tragedy of racial and ethnic disparities in America. I want to commend my colleague, the gentlelady from Ohio, a member of the Ways and Means Committee, Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, and my colleague, our great Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK, for tonight calling us all together later in a Special Order.

I would like to talk just very briefly in support of the efforts of my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus to highlight health care as a central and important policy issue in the 110th Congress and to call for an end to racial and ethnic health disparities.

We must no longer turn a blind eye to the continuing pattern of racial bias in the delivery of health care in America. The fact is that if you are a person of color, are poor or speak a different language and walk into a hospital in need of care, you are less likely to be diagnosed correctly, less likely to receive the accepted standard of care and less likely to walk out. It is a death sentence for millions of Americans.

It is appalling that our Nation cannot commit the resources necessary to eliminate once and for all the devastating impact of unequal health care delivery in America. We must root out the causes of the continuing discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities in our health care system.

We must increase the diversity in the professional health care provider workforce. Health care must be delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate way without having to turn to intermediaries or family members to relay private information, health information. Funding research into the reasons for the different rates of disease incidence and minority populations must be a national priority.

While Latinos and African Americans make up over 25 percent of the U.S. population, they account for more than 67 percent of newly reported AIDS cases. Diseases that primarily impact communities of color continue to be neglected. We must commit to providing access to comprehensive preventive care, educational outreach, health screenings and follow-up consultation for at-risk populations.

Our health care system is broken. Health care should be a right, not a privilege. We spend more money on health care than any other Nation in the world; yet the United States ranks 23rd, 23rd in infant mortality among industrialized nations. We ranked 67th in immunization rates overall, right behind Botswana. We were first in life expectancy in 1945, and now we rank 20th behind nations like Canada, Britain, France and Cuba.

In the 1960s, I lived in Great Britain, and I was exposed to the assurance that the British public had in their access to quality health care with the British national health service. We in America can do better. We must do better. We can ensure that every person in America be treated equally, given a fair and thorough diagnosis and be treated with the most up-to-date treatments that are available. We must remember that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

In any hospital on any given day or night, in communities with large numbers of people of color and African Americans, the poor, you will witness this terrible health care crisis firsthand. Just go to an emergency room and see who needs medical attention, emergency or not.

It's about time that we invest resources to close these deadly, and that's what they are, they are deadly disparities. We need to enact universal health care for all.

America is the wealthiest industrialized country in the world. It is a shame and disgrace that over 47 million have no health insurance and that such a large percentage are African Americans, Latinos and Asian Pacific Americans.

What is wrong with this picture? I just want to commend, again, Congresswoman TUBBS JONES and the Congressional Black Caucus; and also our Tri-Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus and Asian Pacific American Caucus for insisting, and I mean insisting, that this House of Representatives begin to focus on closing these deadly health care disparities among communities of color.

□ 1945

SERGEANT KEITH KLINE

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, I rise tonight to commemorate the life of Sergeant Keith Allen Kline, born and raised in Oak Harbor, Ohio.

Sergeant Kline was serving his second tour of duty when he was mortally wounded while on patrol in Baghdad on July 5, 2007, the day after the 4th of July, his favorite holiday. Today, Sergeant Kline was laid to rest following a fitting and moving ceremony at his alma mater Oak Harbor High School. Through my words this evening, America honors his memory and comforts his family. After the ceremony today, he was laid to rest at Oak Harbor's Union Cemetery.

In his poem, the Psalm of Life, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow writes:

''Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;—
Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.
Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.''

Sergeant Kline lived the spirit of this message. The poem's words served as an epitaph as we recall his life and honor his ultimate sacrifice.

Keith Kline graduated from Oak Harbor High School in 2002. A talented wrestler, he placed in the top six wrestlers in Ohio during his high school years, a truly magnificent achievement from a large State like Ohio. He also played soccer and football and participated in school plays. He enlisted in the U.S. Army post-9/11 following his graduation.

At Fort Gordon, Georgia he completed his advanced individual training and was assigned to Bravo Company, 96th Civil Air Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade. In Iraq 3 months, he was assigned to the Civil Affairs Team supporting the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. In his brief career, his distinguished service brought him four Army achievement medals, a Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terror Expeditionary medal and Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, and Basic Parachutist Badge. His death brought him the posthumous award of the Purple Heart Award, Bronze Star Medal, and Combat Action Badge.

More than a soldier, Keith Kline was known as a goodhearted person that was full of life and a very hard worker. Every single individual who paid him tribute this morning used the term ''a man of great heart.'' He was a NASCAR fan, too, and he reveled in family get-togethers. And his favorite holiday, as I mentioned, was the 4th of July.

Cherishing his memory and celebrating the gift of life are his mother Betty, brother John, stepfather, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and true friends he held close to his heart. We offer them our sincere condolences and heartfelt gratitude as they struggle through this very difficult time. May they find comfort in their loved one's memory, and recall the words of Ecclesiastes 3:1, ''To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven.''

Today, America salutes Sergeant Keith Kline, a valiant son of our Republic, for his patriotism, for his excellence in service, for his courage, and for loving us more than he loved life itself.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PASSING OF RUSSEL TIMOSHENKO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, early in the morning on Saturday, July 7, I awoke to an unusual sound; it was the sound of a police helicopter circling over the community in which I reside. Typically, when you hear a police helicopter you know that something has gone wrong in the community. They are usually searching for a suspect in a crime.

Today, I stand before this body and before you, Mr. Speaker, with a heavy heart. The reason behind that circling was the injuring, critical injuring of an officer, a police officer. And it is with a heavy heart that I stand before you today to honor the life and contribution of a fallen hero, a great American patriot, New York Police Officer Russel Timoshenko. Last weekend, he was tragically shot in the face and the neck and succumbed to those fatal gunshots this weekend.

Officer Timoshenko was born in Belarus and immigrated to the United States in the early 1990s, when he was only 7 years old.

Upon his graduation from Tottenville High School in Staten Island, New York, Russel attended City College and majored in economics while playing on the lacrosse team. I understand, like myself, he loved to dance.

Prior to completing his studies, he decided to become a New York City police officer. During his short career on the force, Officer Timoshenko made 15 arrests. And although Officer Timoshenko had only been on the force for 1½ years, his commitment to protect and serve the least and the greatest in our community embodied the true sentiment of a public servant, and he was highly regarded among his colleagues.

Officer Timoshenko and his partner, Officer Herman Yan, were both shot during a routine traffic stop in Brooklyn in the early morning of Saturday, July 7. Officer Yan survived because of his bulletproof vest, and I pray for his continued speedy recovery. Unfortunately, Officer Timoshenko was shot in the head, and the two bullets that struck him cut across his spinal cord just beneath his brain. Officer Timoshenko did not survive his wounds.

Officer Timoshenko's untimely death was a direct result of the proliferation of illegal guns in my community. His life was taken in service to our city and in pursuit of his oath to protect and serve. And, in so doing, there are three less illegal handguns on the streets of New York.

I stand with the New York City Police Chief, Commissioner Kelly, Mayor Bloomberg, and Governor Spitzer in the fight against illegal gun trafficking into our city, and also in aggressively working to make our neighborhoods safe to live, work, and play.

To the parents and family of Officer Timoshenko, please accept our thanks for sharing him with us. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share the life of such a fine human being. And on behalf of New York's 11th Congressional District, I offer my sincerest condolences, and pray that God will grant the family comfort and peace at this time.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE—PERSONAL ACCOUNT

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. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the irrefutable fact of the Armenian genocide. Looking at the history of this catastrophic event from 1915 to 1918 and the impact it had on the Armenian people, it is impossible to deny that this was indeed genocide by all accounts. But one way, Mr. Speaker, to bear witness to the truth is to make reference to personal accounts when the genocide occurred at the hands of the Ottoman Turks.

Thousands of Armenians have their own account of the horrific events their families had to endure, but tonight I would like to tell the story of one person, Mrs. Haigoohi Hanessian, from Syracuse, New York.

Mrs. Hanessian was born in 1906 in Taurus, Turkey. In 1909, her family fled from their home after receiving word that the Turks were leading a massacre on all Armenians in the area. They took refuge in an institution, and I should say they took refuge, Mr. Speaker, in an American institution, and finally returned to their home only to find it burned to the ground. After traveling and staying with family in different areas, they eventually moved back to Taurus, Turkey.

Yet, again, in 1915, the Armenians were being exiled. Her family was forced to board a train with an unknown destination. With thousands of others, they were herded into these trains, confined in small boxcars for days with no food and no water. Mrs. Hanessian recalls that if someone died on the train, they were simply thrown off the train and were left on the side of the tracks.

When they finally arrived at their destination, they were placed in barracks. She speaks of the sentiments towards the Armenians at the time, stating, ''They wanted all the Armenians to vanish from the Earth. Instead of killing them, they suffered and died.''

The Armenians were then marched through desert towards Syria in extreme heat, again with no food and no water. On the way, many died and were left to rot. After they reached a small

village in Syria, they stayed until they were told to move again. She remembers, ''An order came from all the General Headquarters that all Armenians either be killed or deny their religion and become Muslims.'' Many people converted to save their lives, while others died to preserve their faith.

The Armenians were forced to relocate from village to village. They were left with no money and no supplies, and had to find ways to survive. She said, ''You couldn't get in touch with anybody. You didn't know what to do. We were hungry. It was terrible. We were all dying. We were just skeletons, no food, no nothing.''

Unlike much of Mrs. Hanessian's family who died or disappeared in the genocide, she survived and was able to relocate to the United States and rebuild her life in Syracuse, New York. She has since passed away, but not before she left her story behind, and I am proud to be able to retell her memories, which must never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my support this evening for swift passage of H. Resolution 106, reaffirming the Armenian Genocide. The resolution now has a majority of the Members of the House as cosponsors on a bipartisan basis.

As the first genocide of the 20th century, it is morally imperative that we remember this atrocity and collectively demand reaffirmation of this crime against humanity. By properly affirming the Armenian genocide, we can also help ensure its legacy and rightfully honor its victims and survivors like Mrs. Hanessian.

REVISIONS TO THE 302(a) ALLOCATIONS AND BUDGETARY AGGREGATES ESTABLISHED BY THE CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS ON THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEARS 2007 AND 2008

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to section 207(d) of S. Con. Res. 21, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revised 302 (a) allocations for the House Committee on Appropriations for Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008. Section 207 (d)(2) directs the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget to adjust the discretionary spending allocations for three program integrity initiatives: Continuing Disability Reviews and Supplemental Security Income Redeterminations, Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control, and Unemployment Improper Payment Reviews as provided in section 207 (d)(1)(A), (C) and (D) of S. Con. Res. 21, respectively.

DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS: Appropriations Committee 302(a) Allocation

[In millions of dollars]

	BA	OT
Current allocation:		
Fiscal Year 2007	950,316	1,029,465
Fiscal Year 2008	953,459	1,028,780
Change for H.R. 3043 program integrity initiatives:		
Fiscal Year 2007	0	0
Fiscal Year 2008	636	317
Revised allocation:		
Fiscal Year 2007	950,316	1,029,465
Fiscal Year 2008	954,095	1,029,097

□ 2000

PROVIDING FOR INDIVIDUALS A SECOND CHANCE

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as I was leaving a friend of mine's home on Sunday morning, a young fellow was across the street on the other side and he flagged me down and said, ''Can I talk to you for a moment?'' And so I waited for him to come across the street, and he did. And I asked what I could do for him, and he says, ''Well, I am trying to find a job.'' And I inquired as to his educational background, what kind of things that he could do, and what kind of jobs that he had. And he says, ''Well, I had a job, but then my employer discovered that I also had a felony conviction and he didn't know that when I got hired.'' And, ''Of course,'' he says, ''I have lost my job, lost my house, lost my car, lost my wife, and I am in the process of losing my children.'' And as I listened to him on Sunday morning, it reinforced for me how important it is that we try and provide for individuals like this young man a second chance.

As a matter of fact, our country is the most imprisoned nation on the face of the Earth. More than 2 million people languish in our jails and prisons across the country.

More than 650,000 of them come home every year, and, like this young man, oftentimes find every avenue blocked that prevents them from leading normal lives. Of course, many of them do what we call recidivate, that is, if they don't get any help within 3 years, 67 percent of them will have done what we call re-offend; that is, committed another offense against society. More than 50 percent of them will be re-incarcerated, costing our taxpayers enormous sums of money.

And so I felt compelled to come to the floor and urge my colleagues to support the Second Chance Act, to urge the leadership to bring that legislation to the floor, so that this young man and thousands of others like him can, indeed, experience a second chance.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, tonight I'm joined by members of the Congressional Black Caucus on the first of what will be many CBC message hours. This evening we will be discussing health care disparities, as well as the SCHIP program, which is the State insurance health program.

But before I get into it, I need to ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subjects that I just mentioned, that of health care disparity and the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

For the past few Congresses, the CBC has made confronting health disparities one of its major initiatives. We have been champions for access to affordable health care, meaningful coverage for prescription medications for every American, and increased representation of African Americans across all health care professions.

The health care statistics are staggering in the African American community. While African Americans comprise approximately 12 percent of the U.S. population, in 2000 they represented 19.6 percent of the uninsured. The African American AIDS diagnosis rate was 11 times that of the White diagnosis rate, 23 times more for women and nine times more for men.

African Americans are two times more likely to have diabetes than whites, four times more likely to see their diabetes progress to end-stage renal disease, and four times more likely to have a stroke. And African Americans are only 2.9 percent of the doctors, 9.2 percent of the nurses, 1.5 percent of dentists, and 0.4 percent of health care administrators. Yet African Americans comprise 12 percent of our population.

These problems are just the tip of the iceberg. Tonight, along with my colleagues, we will outline some of the various health issues that currently impact the African American community. Additionally, many of us have legislation that we are working to have passed to provide necessary care and resources to the African American community.

I want to thank the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, and our executive director, Dr. Joe Leonard, for their assistance and work in this effort, and for the record, my communications director Nicole Williams.

At this point I'd like to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. BOBBY SCOTT.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to stress the importance of health care to the well-being of our children and to our Nation. In 2003, a report was released by the National Academy of Science entitled ''Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care.'' It

confirmed what many of us have known for a long time, that even when African Americans and other minorities have equal insurance and equal access to physicians, their outcomes are different.

Minority populations just don't get the same health care and are not offered the same treatments. Unfortunately, we're foundering under the constraints of a profit-driven, multi-tiered health care where racial and ethnic stereotypes often distort the decision-making process by many health care providers.

The situation becomes even more critical when we realize that over 20 percent of all African Americans do not have health insurance. Those who do are more likely to have public insurance or Medicaid, which, unfortunately, often does not command the full measure of services available in private insurance.

Every day, more and more African Americans are diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses which can be avoided with proper care and prevention. The diagnosis of illnesses such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and HIV/AIDS continues to increase among African Americans in the African American culture as access to health care becomes more and more elusive.

It is no surprise that when it comes to taking care of our medical needs, many of us and our Hispanic, Native American and Asian Pacific Islanders are slipping through the safety nets available to other Americans.

Mr. Speaker, the total number of uninsured has actually increased from 41 million, just a few years ago, to 46 million by the most recent numbers. In the country where we pride ourselves as being the world's leading and most prosperous democracy, we have millions of children and young adults walking around without health insurance.

A sad reflection of how ominous the absence of health care insurance can be is the death of a 16-year-old boy in Maryland who died from infections caused by an abscessed tooth because his family had no health insurance to seek medical care.

Mr. Speaker, in the next few weeks, we'll address the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, which is a vital Federal program which allows States to target and cover low-income children with no health insurance and families with incomes above the Medicaid eligibility levels.

Almost 90 percent of these children live in households with a working parent. More than half live in two-family households. Many of these children are actually eligible for coverage under SCHIP or Medicaid but are not enrolled due in large part to barriers to enrollment in programs and complex eligibility rules that make it difficult to obtain or keep coverage. Millions more children are underinsured or at risk of losing coverage if their parents change jobs or if employers drop health coverage for families.

Mr. Speaker, we need to do more than just renew SCHIP. We need to expand it so that it adequately covers every uninsured child living in the United States.

Early and preventive screening, diagnosis and treatment, EPSDT, which would include services such as dental, vision and mental health services should be available to all children. EPSDT is the current requirement under Medicaid to make sure that the health needs of children are being met, and we should bring this requirement to SCHIP.

Coverage for low-income pregnant women. We need to make sure that women are receiving the necessary prenatal care needed to ensure that infants have a healthy start in life.

Presumptive eligibility. We need a unified application system for SCHIP. There are many social services programs, such as reduced or free school lunch, that have eligibility requirements clearly more restrictive than SCHIP. So if a child is eligible for such a program, it is a virtual certainty that he's also eligible for SCHIP.

The problem arises that States do not presume eligibility, and parents are required to fill out different applications in different offices, often with the exact same information, just to access the services they obviously qualify for.

A commonsense solution would be to streamline the application process for SCHIP and other programs so that if you're enrolled in another social service program, you should not have to fill out another application just to get health care benefits. Money to promote the streamlining of this process should be included in the reauthorization of SCHIP.

Mr. Speaker, there is an urgent need for expanded health care coverage for children, and that's why I introduced H.R. 1688, the All Healthy Children's Act. That act has been endorsed by the Children's Defense Fund. It's a logical, smart, and achievable incremental next step to close the child coverage gap and guarantees that all children will have access to health care coverage that they need to survive, thrive, and learn.

This proposal will ensure that all children are covered by expanding the coverage of both Medicaid and SCHIP programs, while eliminating the procedural red tape that currently prevents children from being covered by either program. The comprehensive program would include all basic health care, as well as coverage for mental health and prenatal care.

Mr. Speaker, the United States health care system has yet to solve the fundamental challenge, delivering health care coverage to all Americans at an affordable price. The tragedy is that we know what to do to fix the problem once and for all. And what is required is a national health care system with universal access to comprehensive prevention-oriented benefits. And it is time to take action, and we should start with our children by passing the All Healthy Children's Act.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. SCOTT, thank you very much for your leadership on that issue.

Let me speak for a moment about another piece of legislation that I've introduced with regard to health care disparities. About 7 years ago, one of my staffers approached me with an idea for a piece of legislation. He told me a story of one of his female friends who had been suffering from uterine fibroids. Her condition had taken a tremendous toll on both her and her family, mainly because she was unsure of her options.

This young lady is not alone. There are many women across this country who are silently dealing with this painful, sometime deadly, disease.

Uterine fibroids are noncancerous tumors that form within a woman's uterine lining. It is estimated that three in every four American women have uterine fibroids, with one in four women seeking medical care for the condition. African American women are three to nine times more likely to develop uterine fibroids.

Uterine fibroids can be hard diseases to combat, given the fact that women are diagnosed with the disease at various stages and physical conditions. While the fibroids may develop slowly in some women, others may develop more aggressively.

Right now, hysterectomy is the most common treatment for uterine fibroids, accounting for 200,000, or 30 percent, of all hysterectomies in the United States. It is for this reason that I have reintroduced the Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act to find new and better ways to treat, or even cure, uterine fibroids.

The Uterine Fibroid Research and Education Act would double Federal funding for uterine fibroid research and fund a public education campaign on the condition. Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland introduced companion legislation in the Senate, and we introduced identical legislation in the 109th Congress, but neither received a floor vote.

Even though an estimated three-quarters of all reproductive-age women have uterine fibroids, little is known about them, and there are still few good treatment options available. Women deserve better. I have made it a priority to make sure women are not left out or left behind when it comes to health care.

This legislation would authorize $30 million in Federal funding for uterine fibroid research each year for 5 years, doubling the budget from last year's $15 million. Research is needed to find out what causes uterine fibroids, why African American women are disproportionately affected, and what can be done to prevent and treat the condition.

It is time that we put the health of the women of America in the forefront of our agenda. Therefore, I'm asking all to be supportive on this crucial issue.

Right now I'd like to yield such time as she may consume to Representative DONNA CHRISTENSEN, who is, in fact, a medical doctor; and she chairs the Congressional Black Caucus Health Disparities Health Brain Trust. And this weekend in the Virgin Islands you're hosting a health care health disparities conference, correct?

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Yes. Not only that, but Congressman CLYBURN's district will be hosting a disparities conference, as well as the Tri-Caucus, the Hispanic, Black and Asian Pacific Caucus this weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to join my colleagues to call attention to some critical unmet health care needs that this 110th Congress is called upon to address.

And I also want to applaud our chairwoman, CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, for making this hour available to us and to thank Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES for her leadership as well.

Before I speak about the children's health insurance program, which is up for reauthorization, I want to remind this body that we have not yet appropriated the level of funding that would make a dent in the health disparities that result in 100,000 unnecessary deaths every year because of our country's failure to address them. We worry more about a few dollars that may be less than necessary than we worry about the unnecessary loss of life that happens every day in this country, although we have the wherewithal to stop them.

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Until our country funds disparity elimination adequately, people of color will continue to get to health care services late, if at all, and become disabled or die prematurely from preventable causes.

This Congress will have the opportunity to do just that by passing the Healthcare Equity and Accountability Act, introduced by the Black, Hispanic, and Asian Pacific Caucus last week. That is the way to improve health for everyone and to begin to drive down the skyrocketing cost of health care.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to call our attention to the now chronic underfunding for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, or ADAP. As we have underfunded it every year, the gaps have grown and the waiting lists for lifesaving medicines have grown longer. Some of those waiting in line have died because of our neglect. This Congress, led by Democrats who have always understood the challenges faced by the HIV/AIDS community, more than half of which are people of color, needs to correct this deficiency in funding for this important program.

And, also, Mr. Speaker, very soon we will be reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program. We need to do so fully. Now when we have the opportunity to do the right thing for America's children with whose welfare we are charged, we are poised to shortchange them, to let them down, and to leave them without access to health care. That is unbelievable. There are 9 million uninsured children, of which 6 million are at or below 200 percent of poverty and eligible for SCHIP. I think we should cover all of them, but current proposals don't even cover one-third of those who are eligible.

This Congress should do nothing less than cover all 6 million eligible children, and we must do so with robust programs to foster their mental, dental, and nutritional health. Investing in our children is investing in our future.

The CBO has said that it would cost at least $60 billion to cover all of those eligible children. We are told there are not enough offsets, not enough money to cover the costs.

Well, there are no offsets for the civil war in Iraq, which we are funding while our children are being caught in the crossfire, and there were no offsets for the tax cuts to the wealthiest individuals in this country, both of which are funded in part with money borrowed from Communist China. If we can go into bad debt for those, then we can certainly go into good debt for our children because it is an investment that pays back invaluable dividends. I am willing to bet, Mr. Speaker and colleagues, that we will have to set PAYGO aside for some measure that is deemed important, probably even before this Congress adjourns. So let's do it now for America's children. There is no one and nothing more important than they.

There is one other alternative, and that would be to provide funding to cover all 6 million children for a shorter period of time and revisit that program 2 or 3 years from now when we should be out of Iraq and the tax cuts for the rich would expire. That, I think, is another viable alternative.

We know that the President has said that he will veto a bill if it costs what he considers too much and even the modest proposals from the House and Senate fit that bill. I think that that is a fight the American people would want us to take on because our children are just that important. And so using his own words, I would say ''bring it on.''

Let's not let there be any more Deamonte Drivers, the 11-year-old who died because he could not get an $80 tooth extraction. We are a better country than that.

Thank you, Congresswoman TUBBS JONES.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Thank you, Dr. CHRISTENSEN, for your leadership not only this year but every year that I have been in Congress on the health disparities issue and health care on behalf of all Americans while particularly focused on African Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure at this time to yield to my colleague and good friend DANNY DAVIS from Illinois.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend and thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for not only her leadership on this but her leadership on many issues that affect not only African Americans but people all over America.

Although we are talking about health disparities, let it be known that we don't believe that merely dealing with the disparities is going to get us where we need to be relative to health care in this country. I am firmly convinced that the only way that we will address adequately all of the health care needs that exist in this country is to have a national health plan where everybody is in and nobody is out; where everybody will have access to quality, comprehensive health care without regard to their ability to pay.

I have spent a great deal of my time over the last 2 or 3 years dealing with the particular needs of young African American males. And if we look at that population group, nearly four out of 10 young African American men lack health insurance. The percentage of uninsured African American men, while higher than that of whites, is lower than that of Hispanics, American Indians, and Native Hawaiians. Young men, regardless of race or ethnicity, are more likely to be uninsured than any other age group.

People without health insurance are more likely than those with health insurance to delay needed care, less likely to fill prescriptions, and more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage when they do finally seek care. They are also less likely to have a usual or regular source of care.

Young African American men die at the rate that is at least 1.5 times that of young white and Hispanic men and almost three times the rate of young Asian men. While the death rate drops for men ages 25 to 29 for most groups, it continues to rise among African Americans. The leading causes of death for all young men ages 15 to 29, regardless of race or ethnicity, are unintentional injuries such as car accident, firearm, or drowning, suicide and homicide. For young African American men, more deaths are caused by homicide than any other cause.

Additionally, HIV is the sixth leading cause of death for young African American and Hispanic men. Yet for other racial groups, HIV is not among the top 10 causes of death.

When I hear my colleagues talk about what we need to do and when Representative CLARKE was here a few minutes ago talking about the need for gun control legislation that would make it more difficult to acquire and make use of handguns, that is so real. Not only are those tragedies taking place in New York, but I also take this

opportunity to commend Reverend Jessie Jackson and a coalition of individuals, including Reverend Gregory Livingston, who every Saturday morning have been picketing gun shops outside the City of Chicago. Fortunately, you cannot purchase a handgun in Chicago, but you can go right outside and purchase all that you want.

So I commend them for their efforts to make real the notion that change can occur, but it only comes as we are activated, motivated, stimulated, and involved.

So, again, Representative JONES, I thank you for your leadership. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to put a face on this problem that is plaguing African Americans all over America.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I want to say to you, Mr. DAVIS, also your leadership on the Second Chance Act, you and I have been working on that issue for several years, and, hopefully, it will come to fruition in the next couple, 3 weeks. I look forward to working with you on that and discussing that issue with you.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I must tell you, I was in Detroit at the NAACP convention last week, and there were some folks there from Ohio. And as we talked about what needed to happen, I know I don't have to ask you, but I just know that my representative, Representative Stephanie TUBBS JONES, is up on this, as in my man, you got it right. You're on it; stay on it. We appreciate you so much.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure at this time to have the opportunity to yield to the awesome Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus. She has shown such great leadership not only in this role but as Chair of so many other events that the Congressional Black Caucus has done.

I yield to my sister, the Congresswoman from the great State of Michigan, CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK.

Ms. KILPATRICK. I thank you, Madam Chair, for yielding. I certainly appreciate your leadership and all that you do for this body. I thank you for being the coordinator for this Special Order as we move through this 110th session. We thank you for your leadership, delta woman. We appreciate you.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to stand here tonight as chairperson of the Congressional Black Caucus. We are from 26 States. We are 43 Members. We represent over 40 million Americans. Eighteen of our Members have less than 50 percent populations of African Americans. The highest percentage that any Member represents is 61 percent African Americans. So we represent all ethnicities of America: Latino Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Arab Americans, Italian Americans, European, and the whole conglomerate. So we call ourselves the conscience of the Congress because we are they, 43 of us, 26 States, representing over 40 million Americans who can speak and represent all ethnicities in America.

Disparities in health care is real. It's alive. And it is really determined by how you live, where you live, what economic standards are you able to afford with you and your family, from generations yet unborn. So we are here tonight to talk about how do we close that gap? What ought to be the policies of our United States government to take care of American citizens, 300 million of us, from disparate backgrounds? What can we do to close the gap?

One thing we can do is to make sure that education, quality education, is had for every American; that they may compete not against Ohio or Michigan or California and New York, but to compete in the world, China, India, other countries of the world who revere, and in knowing that education is the key not only to a successful life but a key to adequate health care opportunities.

Number two, that we invest in those communities so that we put the dollars where they are necessary, so that we don't have underserved communities as we have today across America, underserved as it relates to health care, their access to quality health care. Can they really participate in programs that make their lives better?

When we have a healthy America, then we have healthier families, we have healthier cities, and then, of course, our country is one of health.

We talk about disparities of health care, and it refers to the difference between two or more population groups, the outcomes and the prevalence of certain illnesses, heart disease, diabetes, access to quality health care, are we really providing what is necessary for America's families? And we, the members of the Congressional Black Caucus, don't believe that we do.

Our Federal budget is 2.9 trillion of your tax dollars. We round that off and say $3 trillion in this 2008 budget that we are dealing with. Of that budget three entitlements: Medicare, health insurance for 44 million American seniors; Medicaid, over 40 million low-income, disabled, and children's programs; and then our veterans, our proud veterans, who have fought in our wars ever since the beginning, some in battle, some in theater, some not, but defending our country.

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When you take out the main three entitlements, our Appropriations Committee handled 600 to $800 billion. Two-thirds of those monies goes to the entitlements, as was mentioned, and a few others handled by the Ways and Means Committee, where some of those health programs were had. And the other, what we call discretionary funding, is what is handled in the Appropriations Committee.

Of the $800 billion in 2008, $600 billion of that is going to defense, to defense. Proud that we are of our Defense Committee, but never is it intended that two-thirds of that budget, three-fourths in many instances, will go to defend the country. We have to end the war. We've got to bring our soldiers home. We have to invest in American families.

I believe that health care, education, housing, environment and access to capital are those things that this Congress must fund. That's why we have disparities, because many families start at a disadvantage; low income, poor schools, health crisis, unable to get quality health care.

So as we come to you tonight as members of the Congressional Black Caucus, we ask you, America, stand up for what you believe. If you want a strong family, if you want strong opportunities, if you want investment in your children and in your families, speak to that.

Our theme for the Congressional Black Caucus is ''Change Course.'' Do something different, America. Join. Speak out. Donate. Volunteer. Be a part of something that you believe in that will make America stronger. Health care, we believe, is one of those things that you will find yourself participating in.

Change course and then confront the crisis. Confront the crisis of education. Why is it that our schools can't compete with schools around the world? Confront the crisis of the war. And yes, confront the crisis of the disparities in health that we find ourselves in today. We can do better. We can be better. Make sure you're a part of that equation.

And then let us all rise up and continue the legacy. Change course, confront crises, and continue the legacy that all of us have put together as members of the African American Congressional Black Caucus, Latino Caucus, Tri-Caucus, the Asian Caucus as well. We work together to make sure that we begin to address some of the disparities that we see.

So, Madam Chair, thank you for your leadership. Thank you as we try to talk to America to become involved, to change course, to confront crises, to continue the legacy that so many have given their lives and time that we might be on this floor tonight.

This is the greatest country in the world. Let's eliminate the health disparities. Let's make our families stronger. Provide better education opportunities, better work opportunities and, yes, access to capital. When we do that, we will eliminate the disparities that we find now in our health system.

With that, Madam Chair, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Thank you, Madam Chair, for that great presentation and for your leadership.

Being uninsured means going without needed care. It means minor illnesses become major ones because care is delayed. Tragically, it also means that one significant medical expense can wipe out a family's life savings.

There are millions of working uninsured Americans who go to bed worrying about what will happen to them and their families if a major illness or injury strikes.

In my home State of Ohio, there are currently 1,362,000 uninsured, an increase of 18,000 people since 2003. We've also seen the strain on many of the local hospitals in my district when people are forced to use emergency rooms as their source of primary care. The problem is getting worse. As the price of health care continues to rise, fewer individuals and families can afford to pay for the coverage. Fewer small businesses are able to provide coverage for their employees, and those that do are struggling to hold on to the coverage they offer. It is a problem that affects all of us, and we cannot sit idly by while the people of this country continue to go without health insurance.

I am pleased at this juncture to yield such time as she may consume to my colleague and good friend from the great State of Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me thank my distinguished colleague from Cleveland, Ohio, the chairwoman of the Ethics Committee, and as well the first African American woman, only African American woman on the Ways and Means Committee. These two distinctive positions are so important, one, for the health of this body, the Ethics Committee, and two, for the great city that she represents. And I might compete with her, she has the Cleveland Clinic; I have the Texas Medical Center. And I know that we have had the opportunity to work with each other, and I want to thank her for what I think is an enormously important Special Order.

I want to begin, as many of my colleagues have begun, and I want to acknowledge the chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus, Congresswoman KILPATRICK, for the importance of putting a face on the issue of disparities in health care.

In doing that, I'm reminded of the language in the beginning of the Constitution that the Founding Fathers organized to create a more perfect Union. But as they struck out on faith to establish this fledgling United States of America, only 13 colonies, feeling the redcoats breathing down their backs, afraid that at any moment this very fragile government might be toppled, they had enough courage to declare some words that I believe, if this Congress would use it as a moral compass, these issues of Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES would be very clear, and those are the words of the Declaration of Independence that said we all are created equal with certain inalienable rights; the right to pursue life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We are all created equal with certain inalienable rights; the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Clearly, health care is intimately involved in life and the pursuit of happiness. And so in actuality, the Founding Fathers put down a marker of what kind of Nation they wanted this to be. Tragically, over the last years, when our good friends were involved, many of the serious issues of health care were diminished in terms of care and funding. And so it is important that we stand here tonight to be able to lay down the challenge and the charge that we are here to fix it up. We are here to make it right. We are here to correct some of the ills, governmental ills, budgetary ills that have caused health care to be diminished.

And let me cite some important statistics that represent the districts of individuals in this body coming from the south, coming from the midwest, coming from the far west, next to Texas, and parts of the mountain area.

The cost of the war in one district is costing $1 million. And out of that waste of money in the Iraq war, we would be able to provide people with health care: 336,000 adults and 527,000 children, plus, with health care.

Another district, the war is costing them $1.2 million, plus. We would be able to provide 420,000 people with health care if that war was ended, 758,000 children.

Another district, the war is costing them $1.1 million—755,000 people would be able to have health care and 633,000 children. Another district, $812,000 it's costing them, and we would be able to provide 310,000 adults with health care, and children, 502,000.

So, we can already see that we would be able to provide thousands, hundreds of thousands of Americans with health care and hundreds of thousands of children with health care if we, first of all, brought our troops home and ended the Iraq war.

Now, why should we be concerned with that? And the Congressional Black Caucus has gone on the record on questions of disparities in health care. And I might say that this whole issue of disparities is not just an issue of race; it's an issue of dealing with economics. It is the kind of health care that poor people are able to manage to get versus those who are covered, who have means. Some people have means where they pay outright for the care. The Texas Medical Center, for example, has long-time hosted international patients who outright pay for good care. We don't have that luxury here in the United States for many of those who are struggling.

And I might give you just a real-life example, Mr. Speaker, having left my home district and had the challenge and the desire to visit constituents who were ailing. They are now surviving because they happen to be individuals who had the care and the sophistication of family members who could get them to a spot that would, in fact, determine what was the final need of their care. Mr. Speaker, they had a disastrous cancerous organ that was not initially found, and they could have died. But because they had the means, they were able to go through test after test, and one expensive test that is rarely given, an MRI, was able to find that cancerous organ, their life has been saved. Another person with a severe injury or severe disease was able to be cared for and is in the best of care because of means. They live today. But that is not the case in the question of disparities on economics, what you make, and also on race.

I'm very glad to be part of the CBC effort and Health Task Force to focus on ensuring that the Ryan White CARE Act is passed with language that emphasizes minority HIV organizations.

I believe in fixing health care disparities on the ground. I have organized a series of testing activities or actions to engage the community in being tested. Our first effort with a church, 245 persons were tested. And our message is that HIV testing is not a one-shot deal. Just recently, a good friend, Representative Borris Miles, was able to get 7,000, or thousands of persons tested, possibly 7,000 persons, for HIV. We are going to launch another effort of testing and a campaign that says ''HIV testing is not a one-shot deal.''

I am a strong supporter of believing in the Health Centers Renewal Act of 2006. For the time that I have been here, I have emphasized that we have not enough community-based health clinics that were privately owned in neighborhoods accessible to grandmothers and young mothers with children. And we have worked hard to ensure that more community health centers come to Houston, Texas.

I'm proud that in my own congressional district we've opened one in Fifth Ward. We've opened two that are under the auspices of the Martin Luther King Community Center that I worked with and kept their doors open with a $400,000 grant from HHS in the early years of my congressional career. This is a stopgap to the disparities in health care, allowing those in the community to have immediate access to health care.

Then, of course, one of the largest, if I might use the term, Mr. Speaker, ''elephants'' in the room, is the question of obesity in America. As the cochair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, we have worked on the issue of obesity in children. I was very proud to join Congressman DONALD PAYNE for a very thoughtful, forward-thinking session on obesity in New Jersey, and providing remarks dealing with the question of obesity in our children. And it is a disparity in health care as it relates to Hispanic and African American children who are victimized, if you will, in large numbers by the lack of nutritious food that generates an overweight child. That turns into hypertension as an adult, type II diabetes, coronary heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, asthma, bronchitis, sleep apnea, and other respiratory diseases.

There are also increases in overweight among children and teens. For

children age 2 to 5, the prevalence of overweight increased from 5 percent to 13 percent; 6 to 11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5 percent to 18.8 percent; and for age 12 to 19 years, 5 percent to 17.4 percent.

We're working to ensure in the agricultural reauthorization bill that's coming forward that school lunches and school breakfasts are nutritious. That has to be for those children who are poor and are dependent upon those meals as sometimes their only meal.

I passed legislation that involved the creation of an Office of Minority Populations that still stands today, and the idea is to keep the question of disparities in health care before Health and Human Services regardless of who the Secretary is. We can do better in this Congress.

And there are issues dealing with our veterans. I'm very pleased that my VISTA bill was marked up in the veterans which provides added resources for visually impaired veterans in order to assist them in the care of those who are impaired by their recent, if you will, deployment to Iraq and those who are veterans who have suffered injury or have lost their sight.

But we come now to the issue of the SCHIP, which is in the process of being reauthorized. And the difficulty, of course, is that we need to emphasize the crucialness of SCHIP in the Nation and in our States. I believe that the work of the Congressional Black Caucus and all of us in our respective States is a telling answer to health care for children who are at a certain economic level.

Tragically, the State of Texas, after the passage of the 1997 budget resolution which created SCHIP, was one of those States that turned back $400 million because they could not enroll the children. As we move forward, I want to make sure that we move forward on the package that will cover 6 million children. I would like to see us go up to 9 million, but I think we need to look at process. I hope that we do not privatize and make this a market-based program so that people can stuff their pockets with money.

□ 2045

This should be a program that goes directly to these families. Any State that fails to enroll should be penalized by the State's having to refund their own tax dollars, not the money sent for the children. Let us not penalize the children, but let us cause those States to pay fines for their inertia and their inability to enroll these children. I hope that we will have that kind of reform.

Let me close by suggesting that we have an enormous road to take on health care. I am gratified that I hear more African Americans and Hispanics and others of a certain economic level who are prone to these disparities in health care talking about eating right, talking about an intake of less red meat. For those who are on the ranches, and I am from Texas, a good steak is a good thing to have. But to focus on vegetables, and some people have become vegetarians and are drinking water. These are elements that can encourage good health care.

For those of us who have our schedule here in Washington, D.C., a little walking, a little exercise would be good as well. We should probably look at ourselves in the mirror and try to improve our own health status. We have the capability and capacity if and when some health matter would come to our attention, that is a personal matter, but we must speak for the millions of Americans, 44 million, that are uninsured, that do not have access to health care. I do believe that it is time to move for universal access to health care.

So as we move in the 110th Congress and complete this session, I would say to all of my colleagues, be reminded of the Declaration of Independence; we all are created equal with certain inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Health care has to be a constitutional issue and a right for Americans.

Certainly for the least of those we must stand ready to provide them with a strong and forceful statement and action on health care in America. We should have the SCHIP passed without hindrance and without a market-based approach. We should pass universal access to health care so that all Americans, all Americans, can have the ability to be blessed with the virtues of the pursuit of happiness and have good health care.

Mr. Speaker, let me thank my colleague for yielding. Might I also suggest that we have our marching orders at this point, that we will not take a ''no'' on passage of the SCHIP out of this House. We want to see universal access to health care come to the floor.

On the disparity question, I am looking forward to the Congressional Black Caucus and the Tri-Caucus health disparity bill being made in regular order and being brought to this floor as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, we must save lives. We must.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of Special Order to recognize the importance of closing the racial and ethnic health disparities in this country. It is crucial that we continue to bring awareness to the many health concerns facing minority communities and to acknowledge that we need to find solutions to address these concerns. My colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus and I understand the very difficult challenges facing us in the form of huge health disparities among our community and other minority communities. We will continue to seek solutions to those challenges. It is imperative for us to improve the prospects for living long and healthy lives and fostering an ethic of wellness in African-American and other minority communities. I wish to pay special tribute to my colleague, Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN, the Chair of the CBC Health Braintrust, for leading the Congressional Black Caucus in its efforts to bring attention to the health challenges facing minority communities. I thank all of my CBC colleagues who have been toiling in the vineyards for years developing effective public policies and securing the resources needed to eradicate racial and gender disparities in health and wellness.

Let me focus these brief remarks on what I believe are three of the greatest impediments to the health and wellness of the African-American community and other minority communities. The first challenge is to provide everyone access to healthcare. This includes supporting the reauthorization and expansion of the State Children's Heath Insurance Program (SCHIP) so that all of our children who need health insurance will receive it. The second challenge is combating the scourge of HIV/AIDS. The third challenge is to reverse the dangerous trend of increasing obesity in juveniles and young adults.

DIFFERENTIAL ACCESS MAY LEAD TO DISPARITIES IN QUALITY; SUPPORT FOR HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION—H.R. 676

Across this great Nation the health disparities between minority and majority populations are staggering. Most major diseases—diabetes, heart disease, prostate cancer, HIV/AIDS, low-birth weight babies—all hit minority communities harder. As minorities, we constantly have had to endure decreased access to care, and often of lesser quality care, than do members of the majority race in America.

H.R. 676, ''THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE ACT''

Earlier this year, I was proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 676, ''The United States National Health Insurance Act.'' This Act would allow for every American to receive heath insurance. You, the American people called for universal health care, as it was one of the most prominent issues for Americans in the 2006 election.

The need for a high-quality, accessible and affordable health care system has never been more urgent. There are currently 47 million uninsured Americans, 8 million of whom are children. Another 50 million are underinsured. Although the U.S. spends twice as much on health care per capita as countries with universal coverage, the World Health Organization ranks us 37th in overall health system performance. Major American corporations such as General Motors bear the brunt of an outdated health care system because they are at a competitive disadvantage relative to their international counterparts who pay less for health care. A Harvard study found that almost half of all bankruptcies are partially or fully related to health care bills.

Our plan, H.R. 676, ''The United States National Health Insurance Act,'' guarantees every resident of the United States access to a full range of medically necessary services, including primary care, prescription drugs, mental health care and long term care. The role of the government would be limited to collecting revenues and disbursing payments; care would continue to be delivered privately. Patients could continue to use the same hospital, physician or health clinic from which they currently receive services. H.R. 676 is supported by over 210 labor unions and more than 100 grassroots groups across the country. The former editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, two former U.S. Surgeons General and 14,000 physicians support national health insurance.

HEALTH EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2007

I also strongly support the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2007, an important bill that my colleague Congresswoman DONNA CHRISTENSEN has crafted to address the health disparities we face in our community. This bill will provide for:

Creation of Regional Minority Centers of Excellence Programs in medically underserved regions of the country

Creation of Health Information Technology Zones

Data Collection and Analysis Grants for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Services Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Asian American and Pacific Islander-serving institutions with accredited public health, health policy or health services research programs

Reauthorization of the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities

Expansion of funding the Minority AIDS Initiative ($610 million)

Grants for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health

Access to programs and activities and establishes support center to those with limited English proficiency and ensures antidiscrimination provisions and sets standards for these services, such as hiring bilingual staff and informing patients of their rights in their primary language.

Federal agencies that carry out health related activities are mandated to adopt a guidance model on language services.

The Secretary is required to conduct a demonstration project in no less than 30 states or territories showing the impact of costs and health outcomes to those with limited English proficiency.

Grants to improve healthcare for those with communities with low functional literacy.

The preparation and publication of a report that describes government efforts to provide access to culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare services including an evaluation of activities and an explanation of best practices and models.

DHHS will be responsible for submitting a report on health workforce diversity with descriptions of any grant support provided for workforce diversity initiatives.

Establishment of a technical clearinghouse for health workforce diversity with statistical information, model health workforce programs, admissions policies, etc.

Evaluation of workforce diversity initiatives, data collection and reporting by health professional schools, and supporting institutions committed to workforce diversity.

Providing career development for scientists and researchers and for those non-research health professionals.

Provide cultural competence training for health care professionals.

To increase the number of individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds in health professions by enhancing their academic skills and supporting them in training.

Examination of providers and the delivery of culturally and linguistically appropriate services in geographic areas

Makes public the data collected and analyzed.

Grants to eligible institutions to conduct and coordinate research on the built environment and its influence on individual and population-based health.

Such a bill will go a long way in providing for the healthcare needs of minorities and will help to narrow the health disparity gap.

There is no reason why this country should continue down a dreadfully deleterious road of denying healthcare to any citizen of this country who needs it. Many of the health conditions, such as diabetes, obesity, kidney failure, cancer, hypertension and HIV/AIDS, the prevalence of which plagues our community the most, could be curtailed or even prevented if everyone had access to health insurance. I will continue to fight hard for the most effective policy measures that aim to narrow the racial health disparity gap.

It is a misconception that minority healthcare is just about helping minorities. Keeping Americans healthy ensures that children can stay in school and that their parents can go to work. It ensures that our emergency rooms are not glutted. It ensures that our hospitals are not wasting time and money chasing the uninsured with massive bills they cannot afford to pay anyway. Keeping Americans healthy ensures that all of our friends, neighbors, and loved ones can have longer, more productive lives to contribute to our communities and to our economy.

We all pay the cost of leaving people in America without health coverage. We cannot afford to pay that high cost any longer. The time for health equality is now. We need to work to improve access to care for people, in general, but there are also areas where more specific interventions are necessary.

I have worked to improve awareness on prostate cancer, and have worked with MD Anderson to help start clinics in Houston that will open access to quality affordable prostate screening and care. I have worked with Hepatitis C advocates in Houston, and across the Nation, to spread the word that Hep C is a silent killer that is cutting down our minority communities and our veterans. There is so much misinformation out there about Hep C. I am pushing the Government Accountability Office to do a full report on the Hep C problem so that we can work to stop this epidemic.

There is also a significant shortage of minority doctors, dentists, and health professionals of all sorts; a shortage that contributes significantly to quality healthcare access. It has been shown that people tend to seek care from people who look like them, and share similar backgrounds. So, the lack of diversity is not just a civil rights issue, it is an issue of health access. We need to boost minority enrollment in health professional programs.

Success will require young people to redouble their efforts to pursue their scholarly pursuits with a renewed commitment to health and medical research. I am very bullish on academic achievement. That is one reason why I was so interested in securing increased funding for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and research.

There are so many areas in which we need to work together and address the critical needs of the people who are being left out of our health care system. Putting energy and resources into decreasing health disparities is a solid investment, one that will reduce unnecessary suffering, and make our workforce and our society stronger. I pledge to you that I will continue to do my part. By your presence here today, I have no doubt you will continue to do yours. And together, we will see the eradication of serious health inequalities in our lifetimes.

We must ensure that all Americans have access to healthcare. Access to healthcare is an important prerequisite to obtaining quality care. Some access barriers, whether perceived or actual, can result in adverse health outcomes. Patients may perceive barriers to delay seeking needed care, resulting in presentation of illness at a later, less treatable stage of illness. For example, a usual source of care can serve as a navigator to the healthcare system and an advocate to obtain needed evidence-based preventive and health care services. Of the major measures of access, the lack of health insurance has significant consequences. Avoidable hospitalizations are a good example of the link between access and disparities in quality of care. These hospitalizations may reflect, in part, the adequacy of primary care. When health care needs are not met by the primary health care system, rates of avoidable admissions may rise. Many racial and ethnic minorities and individuals of lower socioeconomic status are less likely to have a usual source of care. As a result:

Hispanics and people of lower socioeconomic status are more likely to report unmet health care needs.

While most of the population has health insurance, racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to report health insurance compared with whites. Lower income persons are also less likely to report insurance compared with higher income persons.

Higher rates of avoidable admissions by blacks and lower socioeconomic position persons may be explained, in part, by lower receipt of routine care by these populations.

Many of these circumstances are the direct result of lack of heathcare coverage.

STATE CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (SCHIP)

Until we have a healthcare system that covers all Americans, it is crucial that we reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP. We know that the lack of healthcare contributes greatly to the racial and ethnic health disparities in this country, so we must provide our children with the health insurance coverage to remain healthy. SCHIP, established in 1997 to serve as the healthcare safety net for low-income uninsured children, has decreased the number of uninsured low-income children in the United States by more than one-third. The reduction in the number of uninsured children is even more striking for minority children.

In 2006, SCHIP provided insurance to 6.7 million children. Of these, 6.2 million were in families whose income was less than $33,200 a year for a family of three. SCHIP works in conjunction with the Medicaid safety net that serves the lowest income children and ones with disabilities. Together, these programs provide necessary preventative, primary and acute healthcare services to more than 30 million children. Eighty-six percent of these children are in working families that are unable to obtain or afford private health insurance for their Meanwhile, health care through SCHIP is cost effective: it costs a mere $3.34 a day or $100 a month to cover a child under SCHIP, according to the Congressional Budget Office. There are significant benefits of the State Children's Health Insurance Program when looking at specific populations served by this program.

CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS

SCHIP is significantly important to children living in our country's rural areas. In rural areas:

One in three children has healthcare coverage through SCHIP or more than half of all children whose family income is under $32,180 received healthcare coverage through Medicaid or SCHIP.

Seventeen percent of children continue to be of the 50 counties with the highest rates of uninsured children, 44 are rural counties, with many located in the most remote and isolated parts of the country. Because the goal is to reduce the number of uninsured children, reauthorizing and increasing support for SCHIP will be crucial to helping the uninsured in these counties and reducing the 17 percent of uninsured.

MINORITY CHILDREN

SCHIP has had a dramatic effect in reducing the number of uninsured minority children and providing them access to care:

Between 1996 and 2005, the percentage of low-income African-American and Hispanic children without insurance decreased substantially.

In 1998, roughly 30 percent of Latino children, 20 percent of African-American children, and 18 percent of Asian American and Pacific-Islander children were uninsured. After enactment, those numbers had dropped by 2004 to about 12 percent, and 8 percent, respectively.

Half of all African Americans and Hispanics are already covered by SCHIP or Medicaid.

More than 80 percent of uninsured African-American children and 70 percent of uninsured Hispanic children are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid and SCHIP, so reauthorizing and increasing support for SCHIP will be crucial to insuring this population.

Prior to enrolling in SCHIP, African-American and Hispanic children were much less likely than non-Hispanic White children to have a usual source of care. After they enrolled in SCHIP, these racial and ethnic disparities largely disappeared. In addition, SCHIP eliminated racial and ethnic disparities in unmet medical needs for African-American and Hispanic children, putting them on par with White children.

CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS

SCHIP is also important to children living in urban areas of the country. In urban areas: One in four children has healthcare coverage through SCHIP. More than half of all children whose family income is $32,180 received healthcare coverage through SCHIP.

HIV/AIDS

Ensuring that everyone has healthcare coverage will also help to combat HIV/AIDS in this country, and in particular in African-American and minority communities. In 1981, HIV/AIDS was thought by most Americans to be a new, exotic, and mysterious disease which seemed to inflict primarily gay white males in New York City and San Francisco. But since then we have learned that in the America of 2006, AIDS is overwhelmingly a black and brown disease. And that means that we have to assume the major responsibility for finding the solutions to rid our communities of this scourge. Consider the magnitude of the challenge confronting us:

HIV/AIDS is now the leading cause of death among African Americans ages 25 to 44—ahead of heart disease, accidents, cancer, and homicide.

The rate of AIDS diagnoses for African Americans in 2003 was almost 10 times the rate for whites.

Between 2000 and 2003, the rate of HIV/AIDS among African-American males was seven times the rate for white males and three times the rate for Hispanic males.

African-American adolescents accounted for 65 percent of new AIDS cases reported among teens in 2002, although they only account for 15 percent of American teenagers.

Billions and billions of private and federal dollars have been poured into drug research and development to treat and ''manage'' infections, but the complex life cycle and high mutation rates of HIV strains have only marginally reduced the threat of HIV/AIDS to global public health.

Although the drugs we currently have are effective in managing infections and reducing mortality by slowing the progression to AIDS in an individual, they do little to reduce disease prevalence and prevent new infections. It simply will not suffice to rely upon drugs to manage infection. We can make and market drugs until we have 42 million individually tailored treatments, but so long as a quarter of those infected remain detached from the importance of testing, we have no chance of ending or even ''managing'' the pandemic.

Currently, the only cure we have for HIV/AIDS is prevention. While we must continue efforts to develop advanced treatment options, it is crucial that those efforts are accompanied by dramatic increases in public health education and prevention measures.

Learning whether one is infected with HIV before the virus has already damaged the immune system represents perhaps the greatest opportunity for preventing and treating HIV infection. According to the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, between 2000 and 2003, 56 percent of late testers—defined as those who were diagnosed with full-blown AIDS within 1 year after learning they were HIV-positive—were African Americans, primarily African-American males.

African Americans with HIV have tended to delay being tested because of psychological or social reasons, which means they frequently are diagnosed with full-blown AIDS soon after learning they are infected with HIV. This is the main reason African Americans with AIDS do not live as long as persons with HIV/AIDS from other racial/ethnic groups.

Researchers have identified two unequal tracks of HIV treatment and care in the United States. In the first, or ''ideal track,'' a person discovers she or he is HIV-infected, seeks medical care, has regular follow-ups, and follows a regimen without complications. Persons in this track can now in most cases lead a normal life.

But some individuals follow a second, more-dangerous track. These individuals come to the hospital with full-blown AIDS as their initial diagnosis. They may have limited access to care because of finances or because other social or medical problems interfere. The vast majority of deaths from HIV/AIDS are among this second group. And the persons making up this group are disproportionately African-American males.

I have strongly supported legislation sponsored by CBC members and others to give increased attention and resources to combating HIV/AIDS, including the Ryan White CARE Act. I support legislation to reauthorize funding for community health centers (H.R. 5573, Health Centers Renewal Act of 2006), including the Montrose and Fourth Ward clinics in my home city of Houston, and to provide more nurses for the poor urban communities in which many of these centers are located (H.R. 1285, Nursing Relief Act for Disadvantaged Areas). I have also authored legislation aimed to better educate our children (H.R. 2553, Responsible Education About Life Act in 2006) and eliminate health disparities (H.R. 3561, Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act and the Good Medicine Cultural Competency Act in 2003, H.R. 90).

Twenty-five years from now, I hope that we will not be discussing data on prevalence and mortality of HIV/AIDS among African Americans, but rather how our sustained efforts at elimination have come into fruition. But for us to have that discussion, we must take a number of actions now. We must continue research on treatments and antiretroviral therapies, as well as pursue a cure. We absolutely have to ensure that everyone who needs treatment receives it. And we simply must increase awareness of testing, access to testing, and the accuracy of testing. Because we will never be able to stop this pandemic if we lack the ability to track it.

African Americans are 11 times as likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS, so we must make 11 times the effort to educate them until HIV/AIDS becomes a memory. We simply do not have any other alternative but to work continuously to eliminate HIV/AIDS in our community.

When it comes to the scourge of HIV/AIDS, the African-American community is at war. It is a war we absolutely have to win because at stake is our very survival. With HIV/AIDS we need not wonder whether the enemy will follow us. The enemy is here now. But so is the army that can vanquish the foe. It is us. It is up to us. For if not us, who? If not now, when? If we summon the faith of our ancestors, the courage of our great grandparents, and the determination of our parents, we will march on until victory is won.

OBESITY

The obesity epidemic in the African-American and other minority communities is also of great concern. Although the obesity rates among all African Americans are alarming, as Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I am especially concerned about the childhood obesity epidemic among African-American youth. More than 40 percent of African-American teenagers are overweight, and nearly 25 percent are obese.

Earlier this year, my office in concert with the office of Congressman TOWNS and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, held a widely-attended issue forum entitled, ''Childhood Obesity: Factors Contributing to Its Disproportionate Prevalence in Low Income Communities.'' At this forum, a panel of professionals from the fields of medicine, academia, nutrition, and the food industry discussed the disturbing increasing rates of childhood obesity in minority and low-income communities, and the factors that are contributing to the prevalence in these communities.

What we know is that African-American youth are consuming less nutritious foods such as fruits and vegetables and are not getting enough physical exercise. This combination has led to an epidemic of obesity, which directly contributes to numerous deadly or life-threatening diseases or conditions, including

the following: hypertension; dyslipidemia (high cholesterol or high triglyceride levels), Type 2 diabetes; coronary heart disease; stroke; gallbladder disease; osteoarthritis; asthma; bronchitis; sleep apnea; and other respiratory problems; and cancer (breast, colon, and endometrial).

When ethnicity and income are considered, the picture is even more troubling. African-American youngsters from low-income families have a higher risk for obesity than those from higher-income families. Since the mid-1970s, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased sharply for both adults and children. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among African-American male adults aged 20–74 years the prevalence of obesity increased from 15.0 percent in 1980 survey to 32.9 percent in the 2004.

There were also increases in overweight among children and teens. For children aged 2–5 years, the prevalence of overweight increased from 5.0 percent to 13.9 percent; for those aged 6–11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5 percent to 18.8 percent; and for those aged 12–19 years, prevalence increased from 5.0 percent to 17.4 percent.

As the debate over how to address the rising childhood obesity epidemic continues, it is especially important to explore how attitudes, environmental factors, and public policies influence contribute to obesity among African Americans and other minorities. Some of these contributing factors are environmental, others are cultural, still others are economic, and others still may be lack of education or information. But one thing is clear: we must find ways to remove them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue to support initiatives and programs that close the racial and health disparities gaps. It is imperative that we continue to seek workable solutions to the health and wellness challenges facing our communities. I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to achieve these goals.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the State Children's Health Insurance Program is one of the most important priorities for the Congressional Black Caucus. Let me give you some information about SCHIP.

Of children living in rural areas, one in three children have health care coverage through SCHIP or Medicaid. More than half of all those whose family income is under $32,180 receive health care coverage through Medicaid or SCHIP. Of the 50 counties with the highest rate of uninsured, 44 are rural counties, with many located in the most remote and isolated parts of the country. Because SCHIP's goal is to reduce the number of uninsured children, reauthorizing and increasing support for this program will be crucial to helping the uninsured in these counties and reducing the 17 percent of uninsured.

Let's talk about children living in urban areas. One in four children have health care coverage through SCHIP or Medicaid. More than half of all the children whose family income is under $32,180 receive health care coverage through Medicaid or SCHIP. Nineteen percent continue to be uninsured. Because SCHIP's goal is to reduce the number of uninsured children, reauthorizing and increasing the support will be crucial in this area.

Let me talk about minority children just for a moment. SCHIP had a dramatic effect in reducing the number of uninsured minority children and providing them access to health care. Between 1996 and 2005, the percentage of low-income African American and Hispanic children without insurance decreased substantially. In 1998, roughly 30 percent of Latino children, 20 percent of African American children, and 18 percent of Asian American and Pacific Islander children were uninsured. After SCHIP's enactment, those numbers have dropped by 2004 to about 21 percent, 12 percent, and 8 percent.

Half of all African American and Hispanic children are already covered by SCHIP or Medicaid. More than 80 percent of the uninsured African American children and 70 percent of the uninsured Hispanic children are eligible but not enrolled in Medicaid and SCHIP, so reauthorizing and increasing support will be crucial to insuring this population.

One of the discussions that we have been having about the program is apparently the difficulty in getting young children enrolled in the program, whether they are African American, Hispanic, low-income, rural, or urban. One of the things that we have been talking about with the reauthorization is implementing new ways in which we can enroll children and get parents on board with providing health care to their children. The beauty of the program, as we have talked about previously, is the preventive arm of the program, so that children who have injuries or conditions can get treatment early in the process so that their problems will not escalate.

One of the exciting things that is going on this weekend is the fact that the Congressional Black Caucus is going to be participating in health care disparity events all over the country. In South Carolina, Congressman CLYBURN will be hosting a health and wellness event in Charleston this coming weekend. The 5th Annual Tri-Caucus Minority Health Summit will be held in San Diego, California. As I said previously, Representative DONNA CHRISTENSEN will be hosting an event in St. Croix, Virgin Islands.

We continue to be concerned about the SCHIP program. We are supportive of reauthorization. We are not only supportive, we are demanding reauthorization and requiring that the amount of money that is put into the program be extended such that it will cover most of the young men and women, or children, excuse me, in America. There is some debate about whether or not pregnant women ought to be included in this process. But the reality is, if we don't take care of pregnant women, the children will suffer as a result. So we are moving forward with those issues, as well.

I want to close with just a few more additional facts in and around the issue of health care disparities, because we can never say enough about the impact that it has. Let me talk to you for a moment about amputation. The differences in amputation rates reveal one of the many treatment disparities that exist between racial and ethnic minorities. In general, African Americans and Latinos have higher rates of lower extremity amputation than non-Hispanic whites. It brings to my mind an aunt that I have. Her name is Evelyn Shelton. She is in a nursing facility, having lost both of her legs as a result of a condition of diabetes. Among Medicare beneficiaries, the rate of amputation of all or part of the lower limb was 6.7 percent per 1,000 for African Americans and 1.9 percent per 1,000 for whites.

Let's talk about asthma care. Asthma rates are disproportionately high among racial and ethnic minorities, particularly among the African American community. Moreover, disparities also appear to exist in how asthma is treated in minority populations, with racial and economic minorities often receiving inadequate asthma care. Insured African Americans with asthma are more likely than insured whites to be hospitalized for asthma-related health conditions and are less likely to be treated by an asthma specialist.

African American children are about three times more likely to be hospitalized for asthma than their white peers, and about five times more likely to seek care at an emergency room. Among families in which parents lack any postsecondary education and do not have access to a primary care physician, African American and Latino children with asthma are more likely than white children to underuse routine medications, such as anti-inflammatory agents.

There are other facts that I would like to go on and discuss at the moment, but I don't have the time. There are issues around cancer care, there are issues around, cardiovascular care, there are issues around HIV treatment.

But I am pleased to stand this evening with my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus to discuss the issue of health disparity and to bring attention to those State Children's Health Insurance Program. This is the first of future hours that the Congressional Black Caucus will be hosting on issues that affect the African American community, and particularly but often affect the entire community of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague BARON HILL, we came to Congress at the same time, and I thank you for having the opportunity to speak out on these issues.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support for the continuation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Since 1997, this program has served as a safety net for our Nation's low-income uninsured children. Today, the number of uninsured low-income children participating in SCHIP has fallen by more than one-third. The

number of minority children that participate in the program has decreased even more drastically.

In 2006, 6.7 million of America's children received health care benefits through SCHIP; of these, 6.2 million came from families whose income was less than $33,200 a year for a family of three. SCHIP working in conjunction with Medicaid through State programs provides necessary preventive, primary and acute health care services for the lowest income children and those with disabilities. Overall, these programs service more than 30 million children.

Children living in both rural and urban areas benefit from the SCHIP program. In rural areas, one in three children is covered either through SCHIP or Medicaid. In spite of this statistic, 17 percent of the children living in these areas remain uninsured. In urban areas one in four children has healthcare coverage through SCHIP or Medicaid, but 19 percent continue to be uninsured.

SCHIP also helps to reduce the number of uninsured minority children. The percentage of low-income African-American and Hispanic children without insurance decreased between 1996 and 2005 because of this program. Prior to SCHIP's enactment, approximately 30 percent of Latino children, 20 percent of African-American children, and 18 percent of Asian-American and Pacific Islander children were uninsured. By 2004, those numbers had dropped to 21 percent, 12 percent, and 8 percent respectively.

Mr. Speaker, let's not undermine the purpose of the SCHIP program. We have a responsibility to our children to provide them with one of the most basic needs in our society, equal access to health care. Let us not ignore the great strides that SCHIP has made in reducing the number of uninsured children. Reauthorize the SCHIP program and keep our children insured.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, members of the Congressional Black Caucus wish to call greater attention upon the disparities that exist in health care.

Chilren of color suffer disproportionately from a lack of health insurance.

In my State of Texas, the problem is severe.

Texas has the highest rate of uninsured children in the Nation, with over 21 percent of children—that's 1.4 million—lacking health care coverage.

Across the nation, more than 9 million American children lacked health care coverage in 2005.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program, called SCHIP, is critically important to prevent low- and moderate-income minority children from slipping through the cracks of our health care system.

One problem is that eligible children are not enrolling in SCHIP.

Nearly three-quarters of uninsured children were eligible for health coverage through SCHIP or Medicaid in 2004.

A disproportionate number of those eligible, but uninsured, were either Black or Hispanic.

Without insurance, children living in poverty are likely to have poorer health compared to children with insurance.

Uninsured kids are more likely to lack a regular source of health care, delay or have unmet health care needs, use less preventive care, and receive poorer quality care than children with insurance.

I urge my colleagues to remember our uninsured—especially the children—and have compassion on our Nation's most vulnerable.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

SPEAKING THE TRUTH: OPPOSING UNTRUE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I noticed one of my colleagues in the majority on the Senate side on Fox News Sunday discussing our Nation's Iraq policy. In his conversation with Brit Hume he asserted that our Iraq policy was a failure because of limited progress on the political front in Iraq.

Mr. Hume challenged him on this point by pointing out that progress has been made recently in other areas of Iraq. Mr. Hume noted that if a lack of political progress in Iraq was the only thing that mattered, then couldn't people call the Democrats a failure because of their dismal record on enacting their priorities this session of Congress? The Senator from Michigan responded by drumming up a list of Democrat success, the first of which I find to be entirely dubious.

He attempted to prove that the majority party has not been a complete failure by first saying the Democrats have adopted a budget for the first time in years.

Mr. Hume had asked him, ''My understanding is that you got the minimum wage increase, but nothing else passed. Does that make you a failure?''

The Senator responded, ''Well, no, because it is not true. There is a lot of things that have passed. For the first time in years we have adopted a budget.''

I am not sure if he has been in the same Congress that I have been serving in. He makes it look like it has been years since we passed a budget, and that is simply not true. In 2005, a budget resolution passed the House and the Senate as well as a conference report. In 2006 a budget resolution also passed the House and the Senate without an accompanying conference report.

So I am a little confused as to where the Senator is getting his facts. Unfortunately, Mr. Hume did not catch the untrue statement. As a result, the millions of Americans watching the popular Sunday news program were led to believe that somehow the fact that the majority has adopted a budget resolution was an unusual feat, unseen for years in Congress. I wish to set the record straight.

Some people might wonder why I call attention to this. My reasoning is simple: The truth matters. When we allow untrue statements to enter the public record, we have allowed the public to be led astray. Those to whom we are accountable deserve so much better. The American people deserve the whole truth, the whole picture, not half truths or dodgy statements intended to cloud a less than stellar record of accomplishment.

I will give the Senator from Michigan the benefit the doubt. Maybe he really thought that it has been years since Congress adopted a budget. But if that is the case we have an equally large problem; he can't keep his facts straight. Both problems serve to mislead the American people.

Fortunately, at this point I don't think the American people have been too misled. They know that this majority has quickly established itself as the party of broken promises. Recent polls tell the whole story. Since taking office, the majority's job approval ratings have taken a nosedive. It is not a temporary dip either. Ever since January, their approval ratings have consistently trended negative, dropping from 37 percent to a low of 23 percent. These sorts of ratings are so low that they have even turned heads in Washington, where unpopularity in the polls seems to be a way of life. I will submit for the RECORD a chart showing the plummeting of the Democrat job approval.

But I am concerned about the public dialogue at stake. If Congressional leaders can't be trusted with the basic facts and insist on creating a track record of truth distortion and promise breaking, I see it as my duty to voice opposition. Even if I am the only one raising the alarm, I will continue to call for integrity in all aspects of public life, and especially in that most important of arenas, communicating with the American people.

The facts are important. The American people deserve the respect that comes with not taking liberties with the facts.

□ 2100

AMNESTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well this evening to talk about a very, very important subject that we just went through some very contentious debate on, and my colleagues are familiar with that, and it is the immigration issue. The American people are familiar with it. And the people in the great State of Georgia, the 11th Congressional District that I serve, are familiar with it as well.

And the big concern was to not do something in a, quote, ''comprehensive way'' that resulted in granting amnesty to up to 12 million people, possibly more than that, that have over the last 20 years, since 1986, the last time we granted amnesty to 3 million at that time, we have not secured our borders and because of porous borders,

it is estimated that something approaching 400,000 a year, and some are turned back, obviously, but approximately 400,000 get through. I am talking about illegal immigrants now. And when you do the math over 20 years, that is how we got to the 12 million that are here today. So that bill was all about we need to have the triggers. I am very proud of my Senators, our senior Senator SAXBY CHAMBLISS and JOHNNY ISAKSON. JOHNNY ISAKSON who obviously had the trigger so you couldn't do any of this stuff even if you didn't call it amnesty, you had to secure the borders first.

In the final analysis, because of their great concern, our Senators from Georgia said ''no'' to the bill that was being cooked up on the Senate side and could not be amended to their satisfaction. I am proud of them for that.

But there is another problem, Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, something that maybe the American people are not sufficiently aware of, and that is the fact that so many people come into this country every year on a program called the visa waiver program. I want to repeat that because I want each and every one of you to remember this, the visa waiver program. It too was started back in the mid-1980s, about the time of the amnesty bill we were talking about. What it does is this: it allows citizens from 27 countries, mostly Western European, and it didn't start as 27, but basically the initial countries were the United Kingdom, Germany, France, some of the countries that are really our best friends and best allies, there is no denying that. Without question, over the history of our great country, we have had wonderful friendships in Western Europe.

So the thinking back in 1986 was we need to not spend our time on worrying about doing background checks and our consulates, and those are the offices of our Department of State that exist in all of the other countries. They are part of our embassies. There are more consulates in a country than embassies. My colleagues know what I am talking about, and hopefully folks listening understand that you have State Department employees in all of these countries so when people come and apply for a visa and they want to come visit the United States or come over here to study, or get permanent legal resident, a so-called green card, they have to go through our consulates. They have to fill out forms and pay an application fee. They are all checked to a fare-thee-well, as the old Georgia expression goes, but it was decided in 1986, you know, for the countries where these are our friends, they look like us and in some instances they speak our own language, we don't need to worry about them, and so let's just let them come in without a visa. Therefore, the visa waiver program.

Now it has been expanded to 27 countries and growing. So they just show a passport. Our customs agents at our ports of entry, airports mainly, simply look at the passport. If the passport is from one of the 27 countries, they put a stamp on it and in the person comes.

The thinking is this is good for relations with other countries and we want to be on a friendly level with them. And of course it promotes tourism. And certainly folks involved in the travel industry, and maybe it is businessmen coming over for a 2-week or 2-month period of time. Actually, under the visa waiver program, the maximum amount of time that can be spent here under that program is 90 days.

In the year 2005, Mr. Speaker, 15 million people came to the United States under the visa waiver program. At first it was just a temporary program in 1986, and then it was expanded to more countries. And finally it was made permanent in about the year 2000, this visa waiver program. But we began to realize maybe there was a little bit of security risk, and so we said, look, we want to make sure these passports that we are just looking at and stamping and letting folks come in from these so-called friendly countries, that these are legitimate passports, that these are not fraudulent documents.

Those of my colleagues, and most of you are either parents or grandparents, and you have gone through those teenage years yourself and with your children and grandchildren, and you know it is pretty darn easy to get a fake driver's license. And of course my children, adult children now, never did that. They wouldn't do anything like that, Mr. Speaker. But some of their friends did, and they showed me how it was done. You can go on the Internet and just take your picture and paste it on. That is the kind of thing that is bad enough if it is a fake driver's license in this country, but when we are talking about a fake passport, and they are pretty easy to fraudulently prepare, that is where the danger arises.

Some of the countries, the 27 countries that are participating with us in the visa waiver program, have reported that they have had literally hundreds of passports stolen, and we don't really keep a close record on that but we should. We should be very worried about that, as a matter of fact.

So in 2000 we said, look, here is the way we prevent passport document fraud when people are coming into this country under the visa waiver program. It is a passport issued by Spain, France, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Australia, and I'm not going to name all 27 of the countries, but we want to say, look, we want a digital photograph that we can scan. We don't want some fake overlay laminated on a passport, and we also want to be able to machine read this document.

So, therefore, all of you countries that are participating in this program, that is promoting business and tourism in exchange between countries, you are going to have to prepare your passport in that manner so we know that you have done a background check and we can do a background check. We look at that passport. We know we have a watch list, a terrorist watch list, a criminal felon watch list, so that we do not just let them come in that minute, 1½ minutes that a busy custom agent has at the Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport. They have to do this quickly. If you spend 10 minutes per passport, you are going to have some people outraged, and that is not acceptable. They have to be able to do that quickly.

We knew this back in 2000, and keep in mind, my colleagues, I am talking about a year, a year and a half before 9/11 occurred. We said in the reauthorization of the visa waiver program and making it permanent, the countries had to have these passports based on biometrics, and we called that program US-VISIT. It has not been completed to this day. And after 9/11, of course, a huge wake-up call on many aspects of how we can do things better in regard to maybe we need some armed guards on the planes, and maybe we need to secure the cockpit door and maybe we should allow in certain circumstances the pilots, if they are trained properly, to carry a weapon, we have done a lot of these things to improve.

And of course all these lines, and every Member of this body, every one of you, probably waited in line today for a good little while getting through security before you were allowed to go to the gate to board your plane, and hopefully the plane was on time. If you were delayed too long going through security, hopefully the plane was delayed.

We continue to do these things, but yet this very important aspect, US-VISIT, to make sure, Mr. Speaker, those 15 million folks that come in for business or tourism or whatever, to promote goodwill with these other countries, and I am for that, but they are to stay 90 days. We don't know where they are or how to find them if they don't go back home in 90 days. And to think that even after 9/11, we still keep putting off that date certain these countries have to have and abide by US-VISIT and have to have the biometric passports and we have to have all of the equipment at our ports of entry so the custom agent can simply swipe that passport and it is fine, or a red light goes off.

This is what I am here tonight to talk about, and hopefully you are aware of it. I think most of my colleagues are. But we need to be thinking about this. We need to be thinking about it in a bipartisan way. This is not one of those issues that we should be fighting about politically. We know that this is for the citizens of this country, whether they are Democrats or Republicans, whether they are young or old, whatever their occupation, their religion, ethnicity. This is for everybody. This is not for PHIL GINGREY's district, the 11th Congressional District of northwest Georgia. This is for all of my colleagues' districts. That is why I am here tonight

talking about such an important thing, and I hope we can get everybody's attention on this.

Later on in the hour I am going to talk about a bill that I introduced in regard to the visa waiver program, talk a little bit about what is going on in the other body in regard to the 9/11 bill that we passed I think the first day we were voting on anything in this 110th Congress, the so-called 6 for '06, to do those things that the 9/11 families asked us to do.

After all, they suffered then, are suffering now, and will suffer forever. We listened to them on both sides of the aisle, and we passed a bill. We did most of what they asked in the 109th Congress under different control, and now we have added a few things in the 110th Congress, and we are waiting on the other body. There are some provisions in their version in regard to this visa waiver program that gives me a little heartburn; we will talk about that as well.

I am expecting that some of my colleagues will join me during this hour, Mr. Speaker, and certainly when they get to the floor after their busy meetings that they are attending right now, I am going to yield time to them to give a little different aspect to this visa waiver issue or some other issue of concern to them.

I am a proud member, Mr. Speaker, of the Immigration Reform Caucus. In this 110th Congress, the Immigration Reform Caucus under the leadership of the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY), we have worked hard to make sure that the Immigration Reform Caucus is a bipartisan group of Members, and it is.

□ 2115

I'm not going to stand here and try to name names, but we have got great Members on both sides of the aisle under the leadership of Congressman BILBRAY from California, and I think that's good. I think that's refreshing that Members know that this is not for politics. This is for policy, and this is for protection.

I see that Mr. BILBRAY is actually on the floor now, and I will look forward to hearing his perspective on the visa waiver program. And then we'll develop a colloquy during the next 40 minutes or so. At this time, it's my distinct privilege to welcome him to the floor and to this Special Order hour. I'm grateful to our leadership, the Republican leadership, for making this the minority party's Special Order hour for the evening and that Congressman BILBRAY is going to share the time with me. So I yield to my friend from California.

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia for yielding, and Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you in holding the Chair tonight and thank you very much for the courtesy of allowing us to speak tonight. I appreciate the privilege.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the American people have not only asked, they have demanded, is that the Federal Government live up to its responsibility of defending our neighborhoods from forces from afar that may be entering this country with harm in their hearts and weapons and viciousness in their hands. I think that one of the things that we've really recognized in the past is the review and the oversight of who we allow to come into this country is one of our big responsibilities.

Let's face it, it doesn't take an act of Congress for a community to hire a teacher or hire police officers, but it takes an act of Congress and it takes the Federal Government to make sure that the people that are allowed into this country are people that are going to be friendly to us, to help us, to actually add to the quality and security of America rather than threaten it.

The visa system has always been sort of the minimum we've done in the past, and the visa waiver actually is an extraordinary concept of saying we are so sure that these countries are so secure and so safe that we're willing to waive the traditional international policy of having people kind of report in and prove that they are who they are and we allow them into the country.

And we've allowed this with many countries like Britain, my mother's home country, and Australia, and we've allowed it with many countries. But it's almost as if we've taken this concept that a little is good, a whole bunch must be great, where the political pressure is to expand this program to such a force that there's no counterbalance of saying, no, wait a minute, who's there really checking and keeping a tab on what is reasonable from a security point of view.

And I think what's important tonight for us to say is tonight is a way for the Immigration Caucus to sort of push back and balance. And I don't mind people that are wanting to have this waiver expanded, but I do mind that when we do not balance the perception, that those who may for business reasons or for their own special reasons want to throw away the paperwork, throw away the procedure for security and say it'd just be easier to do without it, they can say that but then there should be those of us who are willing to stand up and say, yes, but it's there for a reason and that reason is very important, the protection of our families and our homes and our neighborhoods. And only the Federal Government can provide this protection.

Remember, if we allow somebody with harm in their heart to enter this country, there is no defense once they're in this country from gaining access to those neighborhoods, those playgrounds, those schools, those hospitals that we take for granted are protected.

Local government cannot check a visa once the United States Federal Government allows them into the country. A county sheriff cannot check a visa once we've allowed them through that port of entry at the airport or at that seaport.

So it is incumbent on us that we're extraordinarily vigilant to make sure that only those that we are sure should be in this country are in this country, and it is extremely important that we only allow the waiver process in those extraordinary situations where we can look the American people in the eye and say we really believe this is a safe and prudent way of treating our immigration policy.

I think people will say then, well, why is there debate here? And I think that the gentleman from Georgia understands, there's people that want for business reasons, for personal reasons, to have people coming, going from all kinds of different countries, and they have their personal reasons to do that. Some may be profit and some may be convenience, but those reasons and those pressures need to be counter-balanced.

And the Federal Government must be reminded again and again that there's not just one agenda here, convenience of people coming into the country. There's not one agenda here, people making money by tourists coming and going. There's not one agenda, just business wanting to be able to have their partners come and go as they want. There is the major agenda that needs to be introduced into the formula, and that is the defense of the communities.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make the point to the gentleman that the first slide that I wanted to show, and let me read this quote from the 9/11 Families for a Secure America. I can't tell you how many of the 9/11 families are a part of this group, but this is how they feel. This is a quote. ''If Islamic extremists commit another 9/11, it will not make any difference to the victims of that attack that the people responsible carried French passports rather than ones issued by Iran, Saudi Arabia or Lebanon.''

This is when they endorsed the bill that I introduced, and we will talk about that a little bit later, but I wanted to yield back to the gentleman for his additional thoughts. But I thought it would be good at this point to interject this quote from the 9/11 Families for a Secure America.

Mr. BILBRAY. I think the real key there, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the outcome does matter when you talk about the security of our Nation, and we forget sometimes when we talk about the security of the Nation that we're talking about the security of our neighborhoods and our homes.

I had the privilege of serving as mayor and chairman of San Diego County and mayor of a small county on the border, and I know and I think any mayor will tell you that those of us in local government just assume the Federal Government's going to do its part. The trouble is the mayor and the police chiefs and the county sheriffs end up having to take on these responsibilities, and they don't have the right to

do what is the Federal Government's responsibility and, that is, check these documents and make sure that the right type of people are coming into the country.

Local government, the mayors, the city council members, the county supervisors, county commissioners, sheriffs, police chiefs, they have to live with the repercussions and the challenges once someone's here, but they don't get the chance to be able to review and approve this. And so that's why it's essential that the Federal Government, which is the only agency that can do this, the one line of defense that we have over inappropriate entry in this country, has to be strong and vigilant and effective.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California.

Mr. Speaker, the next slide that I want my colleagues to focus in on now is really the kind of a passport that we are wanting, and that U.S. VISIT, and indeed the law in regard to the visa waiver program that was made permanent in 2000 requires them to have this type of passport because let me make one thing perfectly clear to my colleagues.

The visa waiver program trusts the security of our Nation to the background check capabilities and the passport procedures of all these foreign governments, the 27 countries that I mentioned and expanding all the time.

Basically, what we're saying, and if you will look at this next slide, on one side of the passport would be a digital photograph, again, one that is scannable. We have these iris scans, not just the old-fashioned finger prints, but everything in a digital way, including the photograph on the passport. And then I'm going to have to get a little closer to read this, but a machine readable passport has two lines of text, has letters, numbers and something called chevrons. Those are those greater than or less than, these little upside down Vs that you put, but it's a way of bringing a secure method to make sure people are not using fraudulent documents.

I want to talk a little bit now, Mr. Speaker, about some of the things that have been happening lately. It's hard to believe that 9/11 was almost 6 years ago. 2001, we're now 2007 and approaching September. It's almost unbelievable, but people tend to forget, and that's part of the problem.

One of my colleagues, whenever he gives a 1 minute or a 5-minute speech or has an opportunity to speak from the well, he always says, and this is the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), as he concludes, and we will never forget 9/11. God bless him for doing that. Sometimes it gets a little trite, but JOE WILSON knows of what he speaks.

But it's easy to forget, but nobody has forgotten about these doctors, doctors, medical doctors, health professionals that just within the last couple, 3 weeks in London and at the airport in Scotland, Glasgow, tried to blow up the terminal with the car bomb, laden with highly explosive material, and there was a warning in fact. Someone had said in some text messaging, beware of those who would cure you, meaning the doctors will kill you; those who cure you will kill you.

Well, these doctors in the United Kingdom were citizens of that country. I mean, they had passports, British passports, and in fact, a couple of them had actually, Mr. Speaker, made an application to come to the United States, I think to come to a hospital in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They wanted to practice medicine here. Everybody does want to practice medicine in the United States because, despite the previous hour from the other side, we do have a great health care system. Certainly it needs some improvement, and we're going to work on that hopefully in a bipartisan way, but these terrorists, those who would cure you that would kill you, were trying, at least some of them, to come into this country.

And they could have come in under this visa waiver program and simply showed a passport that did not, by the way, have a digital photo or any digital text or iris scanning. And we didn't have a U.S. VISIT machine that we could run that passport through that so that that would immediately come, go into a data bank so when the 90 days were up or the period of time that they planned to stay, that we could find them, ferret them out and have the ICE, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, agents go after them.

So this is not child's play that we're talking about here. This happened just within the last 3 weeks, and these were homegrown British terrorists that had ties to al Qaeda in Iraq.

I don't doubt the United Kingdom was one of our closest allies. Indeed, they are. Tony Blair has been our best friend and Gordon Brown will be and has been one of our best friends, but this just goes to show that even our greatest friends can be vulnerable to these homegrown terrorists possessing legitimate citizenship documentation and authorized legal passports.

So this is where we are, and this is what's going on this hour, and I will be happy to yield back to my good friend and colleague, the chairman, once again of our Immigration Reform Caucus for additional thoughts. I proudly, by the way, serve on his executive committee of the Immigration Reform Caucus, and I yield to my friend from California.

Mr. BILBRAY. Thank you. I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia's kind words, and let me just say that in the words of the former Inspector General of Homeland Security, specifically said that we should be abolishing the waiver system, not expanding it. So, on a minimum, we've got to stop the expansion.

I think that it just shows a lack of understanding of just how far the pressure's going to back off on our due diligence when it comes to border security by those people that don't see the big picture, and to think that at this time where we're talking about threats, especially what just happened in England, where somebody who they thought was a safe immigrant, literally drove a fire bomb into the front door of a terminal, if I remember right, and what will happen when we allow somebody to do that?

Frankly, I haven't spoke a lot about this, but on 9/11, I was in the immigration commissioner's office the day the plane started crashing into American buildings.

□ 2130

I was actually in the office, and we watched the second plane crash into the second tower. That commissioner said, can you imagine being the agents who let these guys into the country. Now, we didn't know who did this. We didn't know who was responsible. We had no idea.

But the immigration commissioner had the foresight of saying, my God, somehow I know I am responsible, and you imagine being the agent who personally let these people in.

I don't think we think about this, but tightening up and controlling the waiver process is going to be one of the things we have got to do so we don't look back and say, my God, we were warned, we knew this was coming, and why didn't we do more. Why weren't we there to stop this from happening?

All I have got to say is that I was out of politics. I was just meeting with them about immigration issues, but I saw the anguish and the frustration in his eyes and his voice realizing that somehow he knew the immigration agency that he was in charge of somehow contributed to this disaster.

The fact is, I hope all of us start looking at this as being what are we doing today to make sure that we are not faced off in saying, my God, why didn't I do more. Why didn't I push harder? Why wasn't I the bothersome one that told the administration, I know you are being pressured by these guys, but I am going to pressure you back? I am going to give some balance to the process here in Washington?

I think that's all the American people have asked for, a little balance. Again, as the Inspector General said, now is not the time to expand this program. If the President and the administration honestly believes that this country is under a threat, that this country must do extraordinary things to defend our neighborhoods, then the minimum is not to expand this program.

I think reasonable people should say the administration, rather than looking into expanding this program, should be looking to reduce it, at least temporarily, and ratcheting down and reducing the opportunities for people to come in here unreviewed. Because for every country, for every person

that we allow in this country that we have not done our due diligence, we are exposing the Nation to that threat, and we are exposing ourselves to a lifetime of regrets that we did not do the right thing by the American people.

Mr. GINGREY. Colleagues, what Mr. BILBRAY is talking about, of course, is almost unbelievable, but what he says is true. He knows of what he speaks.

In December of this past year, just 8 months ago, the Department of Homeland Security said that they were going to temporarily, not dismantle, thank God, but temporarily suspend the US-Visit program. I am not sure why they made that decision, maybe too much work, they don't have enough money, I don't know. But we asked them to do it in 2000, we asked them to do it again in 2001 with the PATRIOT Act. We asked them in 2002 with the Secure Border Act. We put deadlines on it.

I guess it's kind of like the fence bill. I know my constituents in the 11th District of Georgia know all about that. They asked me, didn't you guys, PHIL, weren't you part of a group that had an amendment in the 109th Congress where when you guys were in control, when the Republicans were in control, wasn't it your amendment that was adopted that called for 700 miles of fencing along the 2,100 mile southern border where we have got some severe problems, not just people coming, seeking jobs, but potential drug lords and gang members, and, yes, terrorists carrying maybe even a nuclear weapon in a suitcase or a briefcase?

I said, yes, I was part of that. We did pass it. I am very proud of it. Then we came back and passed it again. They want to know why we have only got about 15 miles of the 700. It's hard to explain, and we need to have some conversations with the administration in regard to things that the Congress says need to be done, and we vote them into law, and appropriate money. Yet things either don't happen or happen far too slowly.

To think, though, that they just decided we are going to suspend this US-Visit, and as Mr. BILBRAY, the gentleman from California, just said, this is not the time to suspend US-Visit; this is the time to ramp it up, to make sure that we have a machine that reads these passports at every port of entry.

Hey, if American Express can do it, it seems to me the United States of America can do it. American Express and Visa and MasterCard, they have been doing it a long time. They don't get any cash unless they know you are who you say you are.

This is crazy that we haven't completed this. It's just outrageous, outrageous to suspend a program like that when we need it more than ever.

I know my friend from California has a thought on that, because he just stood up. I look forward to your comments.

Mr. BILBRAY. Just a couple of weeks ago, the Senate was shocked, the White House was shocked at what they saw was a groundswell from America against a proposal that America rightfully thought was amnesty. They wonder why is there so much animosity against Washington on the immigration issue.

It's exactly because of things like the US-Visit system. The American people think that the political leaders of Washington just don't get it and aren't willing to do the heavy lifting. It has been how many years that since, is it 1996, that the US-Visit system was supposed to be implemented. It still hasn't been implemented. Now we have people at a point where they say let's just forget about it.

This is much like the commitments and promises, much like building the fence that the American people have heard so many promises and seen their promises broken so often that they assume this town just does not care or, worse, has been enticed by whatever forces for whatever reason not to do the right thing.

I think when it comes down to developing confidence on the immigration issue, the American people are saying, before you ask us to trust you one more time, we want you to prove to us that you deserve to be trusted.

Go back to the things that you have been promising us for 20 years and do those, get your House in order and take care of it. Things like finish the visit system to where you know who has come into the country and who has gone out of the country. Without that, both, you don't know who stayed in the country.

What's your excuse, Washington? Why are you doing all of these other things that everybody talks about? You can talk about health care. It doesn't take an act of Congress to hire a doctor. It does take an act of Congress to stop a terrorist from crossing the border.

I want to say that it was very scary in February that the Senate was actually looking at expanding the visa waiver. Frankly, I was very proud of one move my Senators, Senator FEINSTEIN, for standing up and saying, whoa, whoa, whoa, we are going a little faster. I want to thank her for that.

It's important that we have bipartisan effort here. The American people are tired of both parties finding excuses and not doing the right thing. They want both parties working together to protect their neighborhoods. When a neighborhood gets blown up, it's Democrats, Republicans and independents whose lives are at stake.

It doesn't draw political lines where the threat is.

Frankly, the issue of being able to address these commonsense things like implementing the US-Visit system, to implement or reduce the impact of the waiver system is something that we need to work together. I want to publicly thank Senator FEINSTEIN for standing up on that issue. I think that we need to push more on that.

But this one right now is that if we can't get the visit system in, what are we doing expanding the visa waiver? That's an extraordinary, extraordinary challenge.

Again, this is why the American people are saying, I don't understand it. How can you ask me to trust you with another law that could be 300 or 1,000 pages when you haven't taken care of the promises you have made over the last 20 years?

Mr. GINGREY. How does the saying go? Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. I think that's exactly the point the Congressman is making in regard to the American people.

They are not happy about being fooled about border security and the nonbuilt fence. They are not happy about this either. They are not happy one bit about suspending this US-Visit program.

I have the next slide, and I think my colleagues will recognize some of these infamous characters. I want to point them out to you, though, once again. Over here, I will point to him, this gentleman right here, is named Richard Reid, but he is better known as the shoe bomber, the shoe bomber.

The shoe bomber flew from Paris with a passport, a citizen from a visa waiver country, got on a plane, had no intention, of course, with a visa waiver, he could stay in the United States for 90 days. He had no intention of getting to the United States. He just wanted to blow that plane to smithereens. Fortunately, we caught him, from a visa waiver program country.

The guy next to him, that's Moussaoui, Zacarias Moussaoui. He is known as the 20th hijacker. He was from Morocco, a French citizen from Morocco, living in France. He flew from London to Chicago and then, as we all remember in the 9/11 report, in particular, this guy, this terrorist with a passport, a legal passport, then enrolled in flight school in Oklahoma City.

Thank goodness that we had very attentive FBI agents who recognized that here was someone that was in this country under the visa waiver program who overstayed his visa. Well, not really a visa, but he overstayed the 90 days, and, fortunately, we caught him. He was the 20th hijacker.

To my near side are the photographs of the Fort Dix Six. These are the so-called pizza delivery guys who were going on the military base at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that represent New Jersey understand the potential horror that these guys, these guys, these terrorists that were here with a passport from a visa waiver country were about to inflict on one of our major military installations.

Well, what I want to talk about now is what I plan to do about this problem with the visa program, not to expand it. The gentleman from California is absolutely right. The other Chamber,

there are Members in this 9/11 bill that we passed back in January, and it's about to go to conference, the Senate version being a little different than the House version, there were some Senators that wanted to expand the visa waiver program, not limit it to the 27, but to expand it far beyond that.

As my colleague pointed out, his Senator from California, Senator FEINSTEIN, said maybe we ought not to do that yet. Well, I do commend her. I join him in commending her for that.

But I want to go a step further. What I want to do, and this is called for in my legislation, H.R. 1342, H.R., House of Representatives bill, 1342, the Secure Entry Act, it's time to suspend this program. It's not time to suspend US-Visit. It's not time to expand the U.S. visa waiver program, as Representative BILBRAY and Senator FEINSTEIN so well know.

We need to suspend this program and say to those countries, the 27 or any others that we expand to, I am not opposed in the future to expand it if they have those biometric machine-readable passports, and they have done the due diligence before they have given those passports, just like you would with a visa. If somebody is going to come over here for two or three years to study or something, they have to answer something like 40 different questions and all these background checks.

Not so with a passport. Getting a passport is about like getting a driver's license or a bank credit card or something. It's just a question or two. What's your name, where do you live, give us a photo.

We are not going to be safe with this program, this program that was initiated, I said at the outset of the hour, back in the mid-1980s to promote tourism, friendship and cultural exchange and to promote international trade and business. The Statue of Liberty says it all. But we are living in a different time now.

□ 2145

We are living in a time that we are not safe with this program. 15 million, I mentioned this earlier, Mr. Speaker, in the hour. 15 million people used this program in the last year that we were counting, 2005. It is probably more than that now. Certainly if we expand it, it will be more than that. So I introduced H.R. 1342, the Secure Entry Act, and this would suspend not end, not end. And I want to say to the ambassadors from the State Departments for these other countries, I have talked to them. They say, well, you are going to hurt tourism. Well, tourism is great, but you tell it to the families of the 9/11 victims, the over 3,000 that are no longer with us. We can do this.

But it seems like in this body and in any situation where you have to accomplish things, people for some reason want to wait until the 11th hour and they won't do it and they will procrastinate and they will drag their feet. It's too much trouble, don't have personnel, don't have the money. Well, you have got to make them do it. And you say, we will suspend the program and you can come to this country only if you have a visa, not with a passport, until you have done what we have our laws require you to do. That is it. That is the bill. And I think when you consider the safety of our people, it is not too much to ask.

We have another. This was someone that came in 1993. I am going back now a little bit. Remember, my colleagues, the first attack on the World Trade Center? They didn't bring it down, but they came close. They came very close, killed a few people, caused a lot of damage. And we treated it as some criminal act, not as an act of terrorism which is what it clearly was. Well, one of those characters we were able to catch, Ahmed Ajaj. And the slide, if you look closely says, ''On September 1, 1992, Ahmed Ajaj fraudulently presented a Swedish, and, yes, my colleagues they are one of the 27 visa waiver countries, presented a Swedish passport without a visa for INS inspection when he arrived at JFK Airport in New York on a flight from Pakistan. Thank goodness, on secondary inspection Ajaj's luggage was searched revealing six bomb making manuals, six as if one wouldn't do, videotapes calling for terrorism against Americans, multiple fake passports, maybe some of those stolen visa waiver passports that we are not keeping up with, and a cheat sheet on how to lie to United States immigration inspectors. They are good at that, these people. Fortunately, Ajaj was arrested for passport fraud, and he was serving, long since over, with a 6-month sentence at the time that his fellow conspirators, his co-conspirators attacked the World Trade Center February 26, 1993.

Mr. Speaker, I want to show another slide, and this is from the Associated Press dated July 13, 2007, 3 days ago. And here is what the Associated Press said: ''Al Qaeda is stepping up its efforts to sneak terror operatives into the United States and has acquired most of the capabilities it needs to strike here, according to a new U.S. intelligence assessment. The group will bolster its efforts to position operatives inside the United States borders. U.S. officials have expressed concern about the ease with which people can enter the United States through Europe,'' that is where most of these visa waiver countries are, in the continent of Europe, ''because of a program that allows most Europeans to enter without visas.''

That is where we are, Mr. Speaker. That is exactly why I am here tonight. That is why the chairman of the bipartisan House Immigration Reform Caucus is with me during this hour. It is that important. It is that important. And we deeply appreciate you listening to us because it is not all about, as we talked about at the top of the hour, this bill that just went crashing down in flames. Because I think, and many of my colleagues feel, and fortunately the Senate rejected anything that looked like amnesty, we have got to secure those borders first and foremost, and that was what everybody has said. Well, maybe, a sigh of relief certainly from Georgians. But this is a different issue but equally important. This is what you call internal security. Not necessarily just securing the southern border, but who do you let in, and under what terms do you let them in, and where are they going? Are they going to do what they say they are going to do, or are they who they say they are? And if they overstay, even if they are legitimate, who is going to round them up? 15 million of them. 15 million in 2005, maybe more now.

Listen to this, Mr. Speaker, some of the participating countries, and I would like my colleagues to pay attention. The 27, I may not mention them all, are: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Monaco, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.K. I left out a few, but you get the picture. You get the picture. I think there is something like 43 countries in Europe. Most of them, 27 at least, are part of this visa waiver program.

We are getting close to the hour that we need to wrap up, but before I do that I want to yield back to my friend from California, who is really a stalwart on immigration reform because he knows the problems that it has created if we don't do the due diligence that the American people have elected us to do. And he knows what has happened and the havoc that it has created in his State, our most populous State, the State of California.

Mr. BILBRAY. I appreciate that. And, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about a visa and we talk about a proposal to go to a $10 visa processing fee, I go to Latin America on most of my family's casual time; it is kind of the untold story that the chairman of the Immigration Caucus spends so much time in Latin America. But they charge $10 for a visa and you go through a process down there. And as a visitor, I don't feel put upon to participate in their security in places like El Salvador or Nicaragua or Mexico. But here, when you talk about these countries that are under the visa, you are talking about some of them with massive amounts of immigration. So somebody could come in from Iran, immigrate to Australia, like I said, my mother's former country, could immigrate from Morocco into France, and then once they get their citizenship in that country then use that citizenship as being a free ride into the United States. So in reality, because immigration has become so fluid and nationalization of foreign nationals has become so easy in so many countries, that the issue of allowing some countries to be exempt from review and oversight and others not really are becoming antiquated, and we

need to get back there. If you do not want a terrorist coming in from the West Bank, going through France and coming into this country, then we have to review everyone who comes into this country.

So, in reality, we should be reducing the visa waiver, because we are not talking about people who have come from those countries, born in those countries, and have long term loyalty to those countries. We are also talking about people who have moved to those countries and might have moved there just a few years ago with the intention of getting their citizenship or getting legal residency to use that residency for the next move. And I think the doctors that tried to kill so many in England this last few months is an example that we really do have to be careful how we get it. Who would have thought that doctors from England could be terrorists. History has proven that those assumptions are wrong. And how many other assumptions are we making today that could be proven wrong in a much more graphic way?

I appreciate the chance, Mr. Speaker, for your patience of allowing us to address you here tonight and the American people here tonight, and I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership on this issue. And I do thank the Georgia delegation for standing so strong and so firm and defending our national sovereignty and defending our neighborhoods by standing strongly for immigration control and proper regulation.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank the gentleman from California. And it reminds me, Mr. Speaker, as we talk about my colleagues from Georgia, Dr. Norwood, Charlie Norwood. We will elect tomorrow someone to replace him, but you can't replace him. Dr. Norwood was so strong on all these immigration issues in regard to that CLEAR Act that would let State and local law enforcement departments participate in apprehending illegals who had committed a felony in this country, God rest the soul of a great Member, Dr. Charlie Norwood.

NATHAN DEAL, our longest serving member second to JOHN LEWIS, and everybody knows JOHN LEWIS; but NATHAN DEAL says we ought to end this nonsense of birthright citizenship, Mr. Speaker. You sneak into this country, the husband and wife both illegals, and have eight children and all of a sudden they are all United States citizens. A lot of countries, most countries have stopped allowing that. So, I am glad my colleague gave me an opportunity to pay tribute to some of my Georgia colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, when we started I didn't think it would take an hour, but when you are passionate about something the time goes by pretty quickly. And this is such an important issue.

Who supports, other than me and I hope the majority of my colleagues in the House of Representatives, suspending the visa waiver program? I will tell you who: The 9/11 families for a Secure America, the Federation for American Immigration Reform, and last but not least because they represent thousands of people in this country, Numbers USA. They are all strongly supportive of this bill. And I hope that we can get it passed, Mr. Speaker, because here again I am not calling for eliminating the visa waiver program; I am saying let's suspend it, let's don't expand it, I agree with Senator FEINSTEIN, and let's get it right. We can get it right, and then people will be safe here.

Listen to what the European terrorist cells have said recently. A quote from Taliban military commander Mansoor Dadullah, as reported by Brian Ross of ABC News. This was just a couple of days ago. ''These Americans, Canadians, British, and Germans come here to Afghanistan from faraway places. Why shouldn't we train them?'' That is what I am talking about, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we are here tonight. We need to suspend this program until we can get it right so that we can protect the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their attention, and I yield back the balance of my time.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased this evening to introduce the subject of children's health insurance and what has really been a remarkably successful Federal-State, public-private initiative that has really helped to make sure that middle class working families across this country have been able to get health insurance for 6 million of their children. So it has really been helping families all across this country be able to do what they want to do as responsible parents, and that is to be able to help pay for health insurance. Every State does it a little bit differently. That is what we are going to talk about this evening; we are going to talk about how important it has been for 10 years in this country to help children in America get the health care they need and they deserve, and it helps them get off to the right kind of start. So I want to talk more about that and I will be joined by some of my colleagues. But because one of my colleagues is going to be taking over in the chair, I am going to give him a few minutes just to talk about the subject. He is a colleague of mine from Pennsylvania. And I will say in Pennsylvania we are very, very proud of having been one of the first States well before the Federal level to start a children's health insurance program. In fact, we called it CHIP, then the SCHIP program started. In 1992 is when we started it in Pennsylvania, and I was instrumental in creating the Children's Health Insurance Program in Pennsylvania. It has been incredibly successful. 130,000 children have health insurance in Pennsylvania.

□ 2200

So a colleague of mine, who has also worked in health care for a good long time and knows about the experience of the Children's Health Insurance Program from the other part of Pennsylvania, in the western part of the State, my colleague, a freshman who's done a wonderful job already, JASON ALTMIRE, Congressman ALTMIRE is going to say a few words, and then we'll continue for the hour.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, she is correct. In the State of Pennsylvania, she did a fantastic job in the State legislature in crafting Pennsylvania's plan with regard to children's health insurance. And Pennsylvania, I think, has one of the best, if not the best plans, the model for the entire country on this issue.

And we're going to be joined tonight by some other people who know a lot about health care and especially know a lot about the children's health insurance programs.

We're going to be joined by Mr. PALLONE, who's the chairman of the Health Subcommittee right here in the House of Representatives for the Energy and Commerce Committee which has jurisdiction over this issue, and there's no one in this Congress who has worked harder on this issue over the years and has more experience with crafting this. He was involved in putting this together 10 years ago and now, as chairman, has certainly had a lot to say about it.

And we're going to be joined by our colleague from Connecticut, Mr. MURPHY, CHRIS MURPHY, who was instrumental in his State legislature on these issues. So we really do have some folks here tonight to talk about this issue who have experience, who have detailed knowledge on this issue.

And what could possibly be more important on the domestic front than health care?

And I'm sure my colleagues would agree, as I travel around my district, I'm sure they have the same experience in their district. That's the issue that comes up more often than any other issue because it affects everybody. It is an issue that, no matter whether you're rich or poor, live in an urban setting, rural setting, you have issues with your health care costs.

Small businesses can no longer afford to offer health insurance in many cases. Large employers are having the same issue.

We have 45 million uninsured in this country, people who lack any health insurance at all, tens of millions more that live in fear of losing their health coverage or are underinsured, don't have adequate coverage to cover their needs.

And 9 million of that 45, Mr. Speaker, are children. And, unfortunately, 6 million of those 9 million children are eligible to participate in the SCHIP program. And the SCHIP program has worked. We're at a 10-year point of reauthorization. And over the past 10 years the number of uninsured children in this country has decreased by 25 percent, while the number of uninsured Americans has increased. This is a program that has worked.

And we talk a lot in this House and a lot during these discussions about the differences between what the President wants to do on the budget level and what this Congress wants to do in a variety of issues. But there is no issue on which there is a starker contrast of opinion than this SCHIP program.

We, as Democrats, want to expand the program in a way that makes sense. It's fiscally responsible, but it's going to pick up many of those 6.2 million children who lack health insurance. We want to find a way to cover those kids.

What could possibly be more important in this country than finding a way to give health insurance to children who live in families that don't have health insurance? I can't think of any more important task.

The President, on the other hand, offered up a budget that actually decreased the number of children that are going to be covered under this program by 1 million. His 5-year budget would have knocked a million children who currently qualify for the program, would have knocked them off the rolls and they would no longer qualify.

And I know my colleagues are going to talk about some of the President's comments recently about what his views are on the program, and I will leave it to them to have that discussion, as I do appreciate the Speaker's indulgence as I have to take the chair following my remarks here.

But I did want to take a moment to just emphasize how important this issue is and to talk about the difference of opinion that exists, not just with Republicans and Democrats, but especially with the administration, Mr. Speaker, and this Congress. There is a stark contrast of opinion, and we're going to have that discussion tonight.

And I thank the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania for her time and all of our colleagues here for their leadership on this important issue.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. I thank the Congressman, and I appreciate that he has other duties to contend with, so he'll be a part of this conversation in a way. But thank you for taking the time to come to the floor and for your help on this.

And I think for many of us, and I know you've just come off the campaign trail this last year, and even those of us who were not campaigning every minute but certainly out and about talking to people, we do hear from everyday families about how hard it is to be able to buy health insurance for kids.

I mean, I remember a story, and maybe my colleagues I'm hoping will share some as well. When I was actually out and about once, and it was actually a church group. And afterwards a woman came up to me and said, you know, I haven't always shared this, but my husband, it was actually a fairly well-to-do area. But she said, my husband was laid off last year and it was a really, really tough time for us as a family. And one of the things that affected us is that we didn't have health insurance. But because of the CHIP program in Pennsylvania, SCHIP as we know it federally, she said, I was able to make sure that my kids had health insurance and they got the health care that I know that they needed and deserved and that we wanted to help make sure they got.

And as someone who, and Congressman ALTMIRE referred to this, in Pennsylvania I'm known as the mother of CHIP. People do come up to me and say, well, we don't always get thanked as elected officials, but do thank me, whether it's stories where someone came up and said my granddaughter who had some health issues, daughter was working hard trying to get a degree and just didn't have health coverage. She said, my granddaughter would not have health coverage without CHIP.

So these are the stories we hear all the time. And I think probably my colleagues will share it. We're going to talk tonight about some of the numbers they already referred to, the 6 million children who have had access to health care, private health care in a lot of situations across the States, the money that we've been able to work with the States where they've put in their own dollars that have made a difference in helping a lot of American families who didn't think that we'd be there to help them who have been able to get health insurance for the kids. But this is a place where we are making a difference in people's lives.

One last story, and then I am going to turn it over to my colleagues. I was talking to a group of school counselors, and some of them, one of them said, stood up and said that she had a child come to her, a teacher came to her and said they had a child in the class who never raised his hand. He's in third grade. Never raised his hand. Never participated in discussions. And she finally broke through to found out what was going on. Turns out he had never had any dental care, and he literally was afraid to open his mouth. It hurt. He had some discomfort. He was embarrassed about the way his teeth looked. And when he got children's health insurance coverage, he got to a dentist, she said he was a different kid. And that would have been a child who would have been a dropout, would have been a troublemaker in school because he just wasn't going to be able to participate.

So she said, health care's important because of health care, but it's also important because of education. If kids are not well, if they don't get the preventative care they need, if they don't get the eyeglasses, if they don't get treated when they're sick, I know it makes a difference to the teachers in my school to be able to teach those kids.

So on every level, and again we're going to talk about big numbers here. The President wants to do $5 billion which will barely be enough to sustain this program. It sounds like big numbers to families listening, but the fact is that we need to make that commitment. And I think we, as Democrats, have said we are going to make a commitment to make sure that the Children's Health Insurance Program continues, that it continues in the dynamic way that it has working with the States. But we're going to even do more. We're going to be a little bold, even in these tough budget times, and we're going to make sure that more children who are now on waiting lists in some States are able to get the health coverage that they deserve. And this is something we can do, we should do. It's about having the political will to make it happen. We're going to protect health care for seniors; we're going to do it for kids. And that's what our discussion is about tonight.

And I'm going to close, and I know you mentioned this as well, the previous speaker talked about the fact that the President, and I'm a little, I have to say, this is very disturbing to many of us because our Republican colleagues helped make this program happen. It was a bipartisan effort. This wasn't something that one side or the other sort of pushed without anyone else caring about it. But the fact is that 193 House Republicans, 10 years ago, voted to make this happen. It was a bipartisan effort; 153 House Democrats. This was a joint effort. We said we wanted to make this happen. We all stand up from time to time and we are really, really proud of this.

So when the President last week said, you know, he just doesn't think this is important, that, in fact, we ought to be doing something else. We ought to be helping families buy private health insurance by getting them some tax deductions. They can't afford it? Well, I don't know what he means.

He actually went on to say that kids can get health care in this country. They can go to the emergency room.

That's really just stunning, given what we know about the high cost of going to emergency rooms, the fact that that is not the best place for primary care. It certainly is not the best place for children who might just need a well-child checkup. So it's absolutely going in the wrong direction on the health care. It's why we wanted to stand up tonight and talk about this. That's why we will continue to until we actually get it done. And I think that the commitment that we have made is to make it happen.

And I'm joined tonight by two colleagues, one, Mr. PALLONE from New Jersey, who has not only been a leader on upgrading the Children's Health Insurance Program, but continues to work out all the details of how to make this happen. And I'm sure he's one of the people who thought we were going to have bipartisan cooperation, and we still hope we will, but is really working on some of the details of how we can and we should do this.

One of the reasons we reauthorize programs is that we want to see what worked best and what didn't; we want to see what changes have to be made given our experience. He is going to talk about some of that work.

And my colleague from Connecticut, who as a State legislator was involved in working on the State level to make this happen and to work in a special way to make Connecticut, make it work for children in Connecticut, and feels a special connection to the Children's Health Insurance Program there.

So gentlemen, I would ask you to share your stories and your help on this. Maybe we'll start with Mr. PALLONE, and if you would help us just sort of by giving us maybe some of the facts and figures or some of the stories that you hear from your colleagues as well.

Mr. PALLONE. I'd be very pleased to do that. And if I could, maybe I'll talk; first of all, let me thank you for doing this hour tonight and for everyone who's joining you, because it is really important. And maybe I'll talk about three things, and then I'll turn it back; and that is, one, how we came about with the SCHIP program because I think that relates to the whole bipartisan nature of it, which is what you stressed and is so important. And then maybe I can talk a little bit about the preventative nature of it because you talked about the emergency room and the President's comments about using the emergency room. And then I'll give you my one story.

I'm glad you're here, in part because last week we had some of my Republican colleagues, including some on the Health Subcommittee that I chair, who were talking about this program as if it was an entitlement, as if it was almost socialism, you know, sort of raising the specter that we wanted the government to run the health care system. And nothing could be further from the truth. I mean, first of all, you know they neglected to mention that this was bipartisan. And remember, when we're talking 10 years ago, this was the Gingrich Congress. This was the Republican majority that hadn't been the majority for very long. I mean, they were on the crest of this conservative right wing wave and in the midst of that were willing to adopt this bipartisan measure.

And the reason was because, in fact it wasn't an entitlement; it wasn't government control. It was just a practical solution to the problems that we faced at the time and still face. I mean, we all know that if people are very poor and likely not working, then they're eligible for Medicaid. And we have a lot of kids, and we have a lot of adults and, you know, people who find themselves because they're not working and their income is very low, having to use the Medicaid program, which is a very legitimate program and covers a lot of people very successfully.

But what we found 10 years ago was that there were a lot of other people who, because they were working, for the most part, were above the Medicaid guidelines. Their income was too high. But what were they making? Maybe 20,000 a year, 30,000, in some cases maybe 40,000 a year and they still had kids. And because they were working in jobs where there wasn't a health insurance option available to them, the employer just didn't offer it, or when they went out in the private market, you know, the costs were so prohibitive for them to buy insurance on the private market, which, you know, in New Jersey you might be paying $12,000 if you want to go out and buy insurance on the private market for a family of four, today that they simply couldn't get health insurance.

And so there wasn't any ideology involved here. In fact, it was a block grant. It was set up as a block grant which, I don't know if you guys remember because you haven't been here as long as me, but that was like the Republican mantra at the time; that everything should be block granted, all Federal Government programs should be block granted; this shouldn't be an entitlement. And that's what we did. We said, okay, fine. You want to make it a block grant. You know, President Clinton was the President, so we had a divided Congress, and we said, that's fine. Send the money to the States. We'll set up certain guidelines that, you know, you had to be up to 200 percent of poverty. And then if the States wanted to, they could go get waivers and go to 300 percent or higher.

□ 2215

And we will give the money to the States. They will match it, and we will cover these kids.

Now, the second point I wanted to make is this is a preventative measure, as you pointed out. For President Bush to say people can always use the emergency, that's not the point. The point is we want people to have health insurance so that they go to the doctor on a regular basis, so they take preventative measures, and they don't get so sick, particularly if they are kids, that they have to go to an emergency room to get care. As you said, that is not the way to operate. So we save money because through prevention, and everyone will tell you, any doctor or medical professional will tell you, that the most important thing for a person is to get health care in those first 4 or 5 years of their life. If they are properly cared for and they have the type of preventative care and regular doctor care and dental care that you mentioned in those formative years, then they are likely to be healthy for the rest of their life because that is the most important time. So it makes sense; right?

And then I will tell you my story. My story is that before this was enacted, about maybe 11 years ago, I don't go there as much anymore, but I used to go to a luncheon place that was like a diner, but not a New Jersey, but more of a luncheonette, we used to call it then. It is like an old-fashioned word, I guess. And there was a waitress there who I knew for a long time, and she had young children. And she would always say that her husband worked and she worked as a waitress but she was never able to afford health insurance for her kids. She wasn't eligible for Medicaid. She and her husband were both working. I don't know how much they made. But she had tried repeatedly and asked me about getting private insurance. I even gave her some ideas about how whom to contact. And they couldn't afford it.

The day that we passed SCHIP, I went back there. I forget how long it was going to be enacted, maybe a couple months from then, and the President signed it. And I said, We are going to have this program now. You can go sign up for it. I went back there whenever it went into effect, and she had signed up her children, and it was the nicest thing that could ever happen.

You know how we always say we want to do things for people but a lot of times we are not able to? For me to be able to go back there and have lunch and have her say, Well, now my kids are covered through this program, it was such a wonderful thing.

And I think the gentleman from Pennsylvania said that right now there are about 6.7 million kids that are covered by SCHIP. There are about 6 million that are eligible and not enrolled. And the reason they are not enrolled, in part, is because the States have run out of money. Some of them ran out of money in March of this year, and we had to do a supplemental appropriation. So we are not talking about all this extra money in a vacuum. We are talking about needing it in order to try to cover as many of these kids as possible. And our reauthorization will not only include more money but also ways of getting them enrolled. One stop so that they sign up for one Federal program. They can get this so that they don't get dropped. This is a streamlined application. These are all the things that we are doing in addition to the dollars in order to try to cover as many kids as possible.

I am staying but I will yield back to the gentlewoman.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to let my colleagues share their stories too so maybe we could have a little conversation about it. But I just want to say that certainly one of the points that have been criticized by the other side is that families that make as

much as $40,000 for a family of four might be eligible or are eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Now, in Pennsylvania it is a subsidy to buy private health insurance. So you either get a complete subsidy or you might just get half of it or you can buy it at cost. In fact, many parents are contributing.

But as you point out, for a family of four making $40,000 a year and both parents might be working, by the time they pay their mortgage and pay the baby-sitter and pay their utility costs and maybe fill up their car with gasoline and pay the loan on the car and they pay their taxes, there is not a lot of money left over to find the $12,000 that they might have to find to purchase private health insurance. So you can say, fine, go to the marketplace, but you need a little help to go to the marketplace. And that is what this is about. And it has made such an enormous difference, thinking you can put a smile on a parent's face for doing the right thing. And good for you to go back and actually say to a person we really did do something for you, and it made such a huge difference.

I think the other point, and this is a lead in to our colleague from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) that the States have always done these programs in different ways. They have written these programs in ways that they think work best.

In 1992, 5 years before the Federal level when we were running it in Pennsylvania, we knew that a lot of these working families wanted a private health insurance card. Some States got very creative and expanded Medicaid and called it cute names, and that made it friendlier, and it is an issue just to tell people it exists. But we actually worked very hard with the private sector to get the benefits package right, to make sure that the cost was right. There were a lot of rules and regulations about it. But the fact is at the end of the day, people could walk in, families could walk into their physicians' offices with a private health insurance card, and that made them feel really proud that they were able to get some help so they could get that private health insurance. But it has made an enormous difference in Pennsylvania. And we have, as I say, about 130,000 children covered on the number of uninsured. It just goes to show it can work. When we work together, we can really make it work.

Mr. MURPHY, if you want to add a bit about the experience in Connecticut. We have been joined by another colleague of ours, Mr. ALLEN from Maine, who also has a long history in being an advocate for children's health insurance and making it happen. So thank you for joining us.

I yield to Mr. MURPHY.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Thank you, Representative SCHWARTZ. I am thrilled to be here with Representative PALLONE and Representative ALLEN, who have been advocating for this issue and many other issues regarding health care equity for a very long time.

I come from the State of Connecticut, where I served, as you mentioned, Representative SCHWARTZ, in the State legislature for about 8 years, and I chaired the Health Committee there for the last 4 years. And what we figured out was what Pennsylvania figured out a little bit before us and what dozens of other State legislatures figured out over the past few years, which is that by expanding our SCHIP program, and we have got a cute name for that program in Connecticut, where we call it the Husky program after the mascot of our University of Connecticut sports teams, we figured out over time that not only was expanding children's health care, and we actually make some adults, some of their parents, eligible for that benefit as well, that not only was it the right thing to do because, as you said and you are exactly right, in the high cost of living in a State of Connecticut, $40,000 doesn't go very far, and at a time we live in today where wages are remaining pretty much stagnant and flat, and when we celebrate a year in which the average health care premium increase stays at around 10 or 11 or 12 percent, you simply can't do much with an income hovering around $40,000, $45,000 or $50,000. In Connecticut certainly that becomes a problem. So what we figured out was that not only was it the right and fair thing to do to go out and insure these thousands of children who didn't have health care insurance before, but it was cost-effective thing to do it. We have referenced that on the floor here today.

I give some credit to the President in his remarks that he at least recognizes that we do have one single place that very ill children and adults can go, the emergency room. But what he neglects to mention in those remarks is that not only is it the most inhumane place to dump the sick and the ill but it is also the most expensive place for those patients to end up. We know that the care that children, and we are talking about children today, end up getting in the emergency room is amongst the most expensive care that you can get. And for just a few cents on the dollar in that preventative care that in Connecticut the Husky program provides and in Pennsylvania the CHIP program provides, you cannot only get care that is the right to do and the moral thing to do for those kids, but it, frankly, saves the health care system money in the end. The cost of insuring kids is actually pretty low compared to the cost of insuring you or me or other people out in the community. Kids are generally pretty healthy. They are cheap when they are healthy, but they are very expensive when they are sick. So if you don't get them that care upfront, and the reality is that a lot of illnesses that may not present themselves to be major that may not cause a parent, even without health care insurance, to drag that child down to the emergency room, it may end up being something very serious. And the barrier to getting that preventative care is often that $100 or $200 doctor visit that stands in the way.

The last thing to say is to just reinforce the notion that both of you have brought up here, which I am sure we will talk about, which is that bipartisan spirit in which this bill was brought into being. I wasn't here when the bill was passed, but my predecessor was. I was preceded in this House by Representative Nancy Johnson, a Republican who served here for a very long time. And she was very proud to come back here as a Republican and talk about her role in the passage of that bill. The problem was over time there were fewer and fewer people like her in the Republican caucus who were proud to talk about insuring children, standing up for kids. And you stand here now on the Republican side of the aisle that looks and sounds very different, unfortunately, than the group that stood up in 1995.

And, lastly, it is not just bipartisan within that House, but you also have a wide range of ideological and advocacy groups that are standing up for the reauthorization of SCHIP, and I will mention just one and that is the United States Chamber of Commerce. Not a fan of big government, if you have ever seen any of the propaganda coming from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. So when you listen to the President or Republicans talk about the Democrats and children's health care being yet another government program, listen to what their friends are saying. Their friends in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable and all of the groups that are traditionally the main cheerleaders against any minute expansion of government are standing up for children's health care, are cheering on the Democratic effort to reauthorize the SCHIP program, because they know what we know; that not only is it the right thing to do but it is the cost-effective thing to do. We figured that out in New Jersey and Pennsylvania and Connecticut and Maine. And I hope that we will be able to return to that bipartisan spirit again.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. If I may, I was very well aware of the fact that so many different organizations were supportive and, again, outside some of their own realm a little bit. So I asked my staff to produce a list. And I have four pages of a closely typewritten list of all the groups. It is the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Business Roundtable and it is also the AFL–CIO, AFSCME, and SEIU. But it is groups that you would think who are advocates for children: the March of Dimes and Families USA and the Children's Defense Fund. But it also is all the senior organizations: the AARP and the Center for Medicare Advocacy and the Alliance for Retired Americans. And so many of the provider groups: AMA and the Academy of Family Physicians and the Academy of Pediatricians. But also America's Health Insurance Plans and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association, PhRMA, who are saying this is an important thing

to do as well, and the American Hospital Association. These are groups where you might say, well, why do they care? Now, hospitals, maybe they could get reimbursed for some of the uncompensated care that they provide, but the fact is that all these groups recognize how important it is. And we have the faith-based organizations: the National Council of the Churches of Christ and the Catholic Health Insurance Association. I mean all of them, all of them, have come together.

For the RECORD I will submit these four pages of the list of all of the different folks who have actually said this is so important. It works. It matters to people. It is helping Americans be healthier and stronger and more productive. And what more important thing can we do than that? I think that was said earlier.

But it is also doable. And we are taking a lot of fiscal responsibility in this new Congress among the Budget Committee. And the gentleman who is going to speak in just a minute is on the Budget Committee, and we have argued in the Budget Committee about how important it is to be smart about how we spend our money, to only spend money we can account for. So we are working very hard in this Congress to say we will not only maintain this program but we will expand it and we will find the money to do that because it is important. And when we are committed to doing something, we will find the money to do it, and that is what we are going to do in this.

I was going to ask my colleague, and I know you have some remarks you would like to make, but if you think about what happens if we don't continue the SCHIP program, I mean that is one of the things that people presume will, of course, continue. But, in fact, the President just said today said that he might veto a reauthorization continuation, just the maintenance of the Children's Health Insurance Program if it is not constructed the way he likes, which is really shocking that 6 million children on October 1 may be without health coverage because of his unwillingness to do this.

So knowing your history and your commitment to health care in general but particularly to children's health care and the good work that your State has done, if you would speak to that as well, I think it would be very helpful for Americans to understand that we are at risk here, that our children are at risk.

And I yield to my colleague Mr. ALLEN from Maine.

□ 2230

Mr. ALLEN. I thank the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania for organizing this event tonight and for yielding to me.

I was here in 1997 when the SCHIP program was passed, and it was passed with very strong bipartisan support. People on both sides of the aisle, and many of the same groups that you just mentioned, people on both sides of the aisle believed, as virtually all Americans do, that our children should get health care. They ought to be able not just to go to an emergency room when they're seriously ill or have had an accident, but they should be able to get preventive care so they can grow up to be healthy children and healthy productive adults. That's really, I think, a fairly basic proposition. And that's what drove us back in 1997.

And now you were asking, what happens if this program doesn't continue? Well, if it's not reauthorized, then 6 million children in this country lose their health insurance. And if they lose their health insurance, maybe some of them, when they're seriously injured, will go to an emergency room, but most of them will lose the preventive care that they get today.

The President put in his budget $5 billion over 5 years for an increase in SCHIP, which would fund about one-third of the amount that States are estimated to require over the next 5 years. In other words, the President's position is that this is a program that should be cut back. And that probably is why he made the veto threat, which he basically said, look, people, children and adults, have access to an emergency room; and one thing we want to be careful not to do is expand health insurance if it's through a government program, which is bizarre, because the SCHIP program is designed for people who cannot afford to buy health insurance in the private market today. That's why they don't have it.

What we're trying to do is continue this public/private partnership because most States provide coverage through private plans. It's a Federal/State partnership, with 70 percent of the money coming from the Federal Government and about 30 percent coming from States. So States are choosing to fund this program for the obvious reason that our kids deserve to have health care coverage. Outside of the White House, this, I think, is a broadly accepted proposition.

I just want to say a few things about my State of Maine. Maine has been very aggressive in using this particular program. We have one of the lowest rates of uninsured children in the country. Only 7 percent of our children do not have health insurance, and the national rate is about 12 percent. But that, for us, we're a small State, but that's about 19,000 children who do not have health insurance. And for those families, for those parents, they know it makes a difference whether or not their kids have health insurance. And they, I know because I've talked to them, worry about whether they're going to get the kind of coverage, the kind of vaccinations, the kind of preventive health care that everyone hopes for their children, because that's really a fundamental point here.

I don't think there is a parent in America that doesn't want their children to have good health coverage, to get the health care they need when they need it. And that is what this program attempts to do. Because there are 6 million children in this country today who qualify for the SCHIP program but are not signed up, for whatever reason. Some States aren't being aggressive enough and the Federal Government contribution is falling short.

There are another 3 million who don't qualify for SCHIP and still don't have coverage. And all we're trying to do, as Democrats, is to expand that coverage. Now, we can argue about how fast we expand it, we can argue about how we pay for it, but the bottom line is this: children in America deserve to have health care. And we know if they have health insurance, whether the program is privately run or whether the program is publicly run, or some combination, they are much more likely to grow up into healthy, productive children and healthy, productive adults. That's what we're fighting here today for.

I want to thank you, my colleague, the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania, and all the rest of my friends here tonight for pushing this issue so hard and so long. We will not fail. And I yield back.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. And I think this is where we can get a chance to have a little bit of a conversation. There is a lot of feeling about it. I think all of us feel that we should be working as hard as we possible can to be getting this done, not be sort of saying, okay, I'm not interested, we'll do something else.

There are a lot of priorities here. We stand up on the floor frequently and say, okay, one of the most important things we can do is this, one of the most important things we can do is that. But the fact is if we aren't all parents, and many of us are, then we certainly have nieces or nephews we love, or neighborhood children. All of us know someone who has struggled through a moment when they couldn't provide the essentials. This is not a frill. And I think that's what you were saying, Mr. ALLEN, is this is not an, okay, if you can get to do it, go do it. This is something that's really essential for every child in America. And we're helping parents to be able to meet that essential requirement for their children.

Some of you may know, my husband is a physician. And I was joking with my staff that he cuts out articles from the New England Journal of Medicine all the time for me to read. And mostly they're not so readable for me, I have to admit, you know, they sort of need some interpretation. But just in the last week's journal there is a wonderful article talking about the imperative to continue the SCHIP program. And I'll share it with my colleagues, I'll send it around to everyone tomorrow, but really it made it very, very clear that this is something that we need to do because of the medical imperative, the health care imperative. And we know it is something that we can do.

So, it's something we're proud of and we should be and we want to do.

Mr. PALLONE, you look like you're ready to jump in here.

Mr. PALLONE. You know, when you relate your own experiences, I can relate so much to it myself.

I have to say, I was thinking back about 10 years ago when we first started the program. Of course, my wife and I were just starting to have kids. My oldest daughter now is 13, so she was three at the time. And I guess I had my son at the time, he was only one. And we were starting to realize at the time about the fact that, first of all, as parents, the idea of kids not having health insurance, you know, young kids at that age was really an awful thing. And that's why we got involved. I say ''we'' because my wife got involved in the whole issue as well. And to think about the fact that you have children and they can't have health insurance or you have to take them to an emergency room is just an awful thing.

I worry myself even now because a lot of times your health insurance doesn't cover everything. Like I was faced with the orthodontist bill a couple years ago. And I suddenly realized our insurance doesn't cover orthodontistry. And that was upsetting, but to think of parents that can't even take their kids to the doctor is just an awful thing.

One of the things that my wife would always say to me that she observed was that many times government officials, and I don't want to speak about ourselves because I don't want to be critical, but a lot of times politicians don't think about kids because of the fact that they don't vote. And I would almost kind of differ with the gentleman from Maine when he says that, you know, one of the things that we found and one of the reasons why States like Connecticut and New Jersey have covered some of the parents is because they have noticed that a lot of times the parents wouldn't enroll the kids unless they were eligible themselves to be enrolled in the program. And I again go back to, this is really a very practical thing. If some States have found that the parents won't enroll the kids unless they're enrolled, they actually allow the parents to enroll as an incentive to get the kids enrolled.

Because you can be cynical. I mean, you have to say that unfortunately sometimes parents don't care or sometimes politicians don't care. And the fact that we were able to do this and basically do a kids' health initiative program and get the political support for it in some ways was an amazing thing. You would say, well, gee, that's a basic thing, why wouldn't that happen? But it wasn't that easy. And we're going to have to continue to fight to expand it today.

I just wanted to answer your question, because I know that the gentleman from Maine did, but you said, what would happen if we don't reauthorize?

Well, I will just say, first of all, essentially this has happened in some fashion in the last few years. States have run out of money because there wasn't enough money as early as March in a given calendar year. Georgia ran out of money this March. And my own State started to run out of money by May. So we had to actually do a supplemental appropriation. The world knows it as the ''Iraq supplemental,'' but actually it was the supplemental that included the funding for Iraq, and it included about $750 million for SCHIP because States, in fact, were running out of money.

In my own State of New Jersey a couple of years had to cut back on the program and actually lower the eligibility and eliminate parents because of the fact that they started to run out of money. So we have experience of what actually happens if we don't provide the additional funds.

The other thing, too, is that until last year, every year for the first 9 years of the program, the number of uninsured kids in the country was going down. But last year, for the first time, the number of uninsured kids went up. So this is a crisis. I mean, if we're going to get to those extra kids, we really have to do something.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. And just on that note, if the gentleman would yield, we do know that the number of uninsured for the first time in a long time is going up again. So we're talking about 45 million Americans. And the fact that, of those, 9 million are children who, again, through no fault of their own, don't have access to health insurance.

And one of the reasons is that health insurance is expensive. And even for businesses that want to provide health insurance for their employees, sometimes they're faced, particularly small businesses, with how do I actually pay that whole amount for family coverage? And they just cover the employee. And so even here, where you're talking about employers trying to do the responsible thing, but just looking at their bottom line and saying I can't do anything about this, when the parent is covered and the child is not is one situation where certainly CHIP comes in and really can be very, very helpful.

There has been some discussion obviously about adults. And I think this is intended for children. Some States have brought along the parents because it does help with enrollment, and we think that's true in Pennsylvania as well. But we also know that when the parents don't have health insurance, and if they can't get timely health care, then they don't have an ongoing relationship with a physician or a medical group. And the children also learn from their parents. Their parents are their models. And so if the parents are going for regular checkups and their kids are going for regular checkups and it's part of what you learn to do as a responsible person, that's a good package. It's what we want adults do be doing as well.

So I know that there is some discussion about that, too, whether States, now they're not allowed anymore to be able to sign up adults alone, but they're usually signed up with their children as a family coverage. And that's the way most people who buy insurance do it, too. They buy insurance for their family. That's the way it's sold mostly. So I think it's making sure that we actually allow people to sort of use the marketplace the way it really works and not punish them for that.

Mr. PALLONE. If I could point out one thing, too, because I know there is some debate about this. The States don't get any more money because they cover kids at a higher percentage of poverty or because they cover the adults, and I think there has been some debate about that. Remember, as I said before, this is a block grant, and the money that goes to the States is dependent upon the number of children that they have. So the fact of the matter is that if a State decides, like Connecticut did, that they're going to cover the adults, they just have to stretch out the Federal funds and contribute more State dollars to pay for it. They don't get additional money. I know that this sounds like such a bureaucratic comment, but some Members are worried, well, is my State going to get more because they cover kids at a higher level of poverty or another State covers adults. They don't. It's just a question of usually they're providing more State dollars and having the flexibility to include the parents so that they can cover the kids.

Mr. ALLEN. If the gentlewoman would yield, there are differences among States and now aggressively they seek to use the money that comes from the Federal Government. So there certainly are differences among States in that respect.

But I just wanted to comment. It is absolutely true that most people who buy insurance through a private plan will try to cover their kids as well, except that today one of the trends in this country is that the wheels are coming off this employer-based health care system and increasingly, by about a million people a year over the last 4 or 5 years, the number of uninsured is going up. It's now about 46 million people. And one of the reasons, and this is why I've done a plan for small businesses, one of the reasons is the small business community is simply not able to afford the kind of insurance they had in the past. And what they're doing, they're tending not to cover family members, which includes the children, and to require the employee to pay a higher and higher percentage, which some employees simply can't do.

So what we're seeing here, at the same time as the President is saying we don't want to expand this successful children's health care program, we're watching the number of uninsured

steadily climb, both adults, and now children for the first time in a long period of time, having the number of uninsured climb because the private market, the employer-based market isn't working as well as it did in the past.

We have a national health care crisis on our hands, and this is a part of the solution. It ought to be the easiest part of the solution. But here is the President's spokesman the other day saying this will encourage many to drop private coverage purchased through their employer or with their own resources to go on a government-subsidized program. This is a program that is designed for people who don't have health insurance. We know these children don't have health insurance. We know how many there are. We know where they are. And we ought to be able to do a better job than simply to raise this kind of ideological objection. We ought to cover them first in the most practical, cost-efficient way.

I yield back.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. ALLEN, if you would yield. I guess I come to the thinking, we wish we were in that position. I mean, wouldn't it be lovely, wouldn't it be wonderful if we were in the position in which the choice was between a government-sponsored program and an employer-sponsored program or a privately available sponsored program. It just isn't the reality. And anybody who spends time out in their communities, in their social halls, in their churches and synagogues listening to families will realize that, that there are just more and more families largely, as Mr. ALLEN noted, that work for small businesses and simply don't have the access to health care insurance that they once did.

And I want to hit one more point, and I mentioned it the other night when Mr. PALLONE and I were down here talking about this. We also have to disabuse people of this notion that we all aren't paying for those kids and those parents who don't have health care insurance. If the employer doesn't provide it, and then the HUSKY program in Connecticut, the SCHIP programs go away, somebody is going to pay for that health care. And we pay for it largely in two ways: one, all of the premiums that we pay, as insured people, are higher because they are basically subsidizing the care of people that don't have health care insurance, because a doctor is going to have to treat, by law, someone that shows up in an emergency room, and the hospital has to be compensated for that.

□ 2245

So private insurance normally pays about 120 percent, 110 percent of what the average Medicare rate is. They are paying a 20 percent, 10 percent premium in order to subsidize the care of the uninsured. I don't know if this is the case in all States, but in Connecticut, we also have an uncompensated care pool, a taxpayer-funded pool, where tax dollars go directly to hospitals and health care providers to help them pay for the kids that walk in, 70,000 of them without health care insurance in Connecticut that have no insurance.

So the idea that we are going to be spending any more money on this, when really what you are doing is you are shifting money that we are all spending in our private rates and through these taxpayer-subsidized pools of money that go to hospitals, it is just shifting it to preventive care. We have to sort of remind people that we are paying every day for the uninsured that we have now. It is simply about building a more cost effective and more humane way of paying for it.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. I think we should continue this discussion about what is the smartest and most efficient way to do this. Again, what is interesting about the way SCHIP, the children's health insurance initiative, was set up is it said to each State, one, you don't have to do it if you don't want to, if you don't have a problem, or you don't think this is an issue. We were not even sure how it would all work out. They also said, then you can create whatever initiative works for you, what really works for you. It turns out every State has chosen to do it.

Actually, we already had SCHIP in Pennsylvania for 5 years when the Federal Government came in. Our governor was very nervous about taking it. He wasn't sure he wanted to do this. He was concerned it would be a new entitlement program and that he would be stuck with the bill at the end of the day. I know States had legitimate worries about that, that we actually tell them to do things and then don't give them any help in doing it.

But this is one case where we said, no, you have to do it. You have to structure the program. Here are some guidelines. Here is how we think you should do it. Then we are going to pay a part of it, a good part of it, but we are not paying all of it. You have to buy into it. You have to want to do it, also. You have to structure this.

So every State did this. We learned from each other. That also was a good thing, to look around and see what worked for other States and what didn't. When our governor was saying, should we do it? He really was very torn about it. Actually, he didn't decide to do it until September 30, and that was the deadline that year. I was very anxious. I was on the floor of the State senate many nights saying we ought to do this. I was pushing him to do that.

Of course, we were able then to triple the number of children who were covered because of the partnership we had with the Federal Government. That is what this is about. It really is. This is a great example of a very innovative way to create a partnership between the Federal Government and the States, between insurers in some ways and the States as well, in many cases, and between parents and families and health care providers, and say, we are all going to help make this happen.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Just to add to that partnership, it is also a partnership of health care professionals as well, because, to tell the truth, in a lot of States, Connecticut being one of them, the rate that we pay physicians for participating in the program is a little bit below the level of sufficiency. So there are a lot of physicians who want to do the right thing, who want to get compensated, but are okay not getting compensated at the same levels that they do by private HMOs.

It really becomes in the end, it really becomes a partnership of not only the Federal Government and the State Government, but also the provider community as well who has agreed to say, listen, because we really care and we really want to take care of this constituency, we are willing to do it for a little bit less than we would do otherwise. That has been a great benefit to the Government, to be able to get away with paying a little bit less, at least in Connecticut, than private payers do. But it is a wonderful partnership of all constituency groups.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Again, the debate here is how much can we do? What can we afford to do? What is the best way to do it? Mr. PALLONE is working on all those details. I know we bug him and give our him suggestions about how to make this easier and streamline the bureaucracy and make it work for both providers and for children and for the States. So we are learning from that. I think that is pretty exciting.

But that is not the discussion that some are in. We were in that discussion since January, actually. This is certainly something that the President proposed. We wanted to push much further. But I just say that is unfortunate. I think that is why we are so deeply disturbed.

I will say that the President is consistent here. I will add just a note that when he was Governor, he was very reluctant to participate in the Children's Health Insurance Program and actually worked quite actively not to be engaged, not to have his State do it, and then tried to keep the level of the family to be as poor as possible.

He did not want to go to 200 percent of poverty. He wanted to keep it lower. He did not want to reach into the sort of the really working folks in Texas who were struggling. You may want to comment on that.

But I think for so many of my constituents, and again I think, Mr. PALLONE, you pointed this out earlier, for very poor people in this country, we do have health care coverage. But for the people who are above that level, who say I don't know that there is anyone there to help me, this is actually one way to say, that is right, we are going to help you be able to get health insurance for your kids. You are working. You are trying to do the right thing, and this is the way we can help you do it.

So for the very people who are playing by the rules, trying to do it right, struggling to make ends meet, to be able to help them get health insurance for their kids makes such a world of difference to their peace of mind and, of course, to the actual health of their kids.

Mr. PALLONE. I just think the President has been very inconsistent. You talk about his experience as governor of Texas. But keep in mind that for the last 6 or 7 years, he has actually been granting the waivers. For example, right now the law says 200 percent of poverty, is what the law says in terms of eligibility. But it allows for waivers, and he has given waivers for so many States, I think as many as around 15 States, to go to 300 percent of poverty, to allow adults in some cases. His administration had to approve all those.

So I was very surprised in the early part of this year when he said that he wanted to keep it at 200 percent, he didn't want to cover any of the adults, because he has allowed that flexibility during his administration.

One of the things that the National Governors Association said unanimously was that they wanted States to have the flexibility. Again, I point out, this is a block grant. The States don't get any more money because they cover adults or go to higher levels of poverty or lesser levels. There is also flexibility, and some States don't count assets in determining that 100 percent or the 300 percent.

I think it really makes sense, and the National Governors Association said it makes sense to leave it to the States to have that flexibility, and the President historically has been in favor of that kind of flexibility. So I really don't understand where he is coming from.

The other thing I wanted to mention is we were talking about alternatives. When I listened last week to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, some of them were saying, well, people can go to community health centers. That was another thing that I heard. Well, the President talked about emergency rooms and some of our colleagues on the Republican said, well, they can go to community health centers.

Well, I am all in favor of expanding community health centers, but in my district I think we have maybe four Federally sponsored, maybe 5, community health centers. There is absolutely no way that the kids and the parents are going to line up. They don't have the ability to handle all the kids.

So what you said is true. They are going to end up being in an emergency room. They are part of charity care whose responsibility is on the rest of the taxpayers.

Then I heard another one of our Republican colleagues say, well, what we really need is, and I wrote it down, competition in the marketplace. And I was saying, what are we talking about here? Again, this is people who are working, who can't afford health insurance. What competition? They can't go out and buy it on the individual market.

So we hear a lot of inconsistencies. I don't want to be so critical of our Republican colleagues, because I want them to join us on this. But some of the statements that have been made by the President in the last few days.

I would point out in the Senate, as you know, the Republicans and Democrats came together and they are about to pass a bipartisan SCHIP expansion. So the Republicans in the Senate hopefully can talk to the President and the Republicans in the House and say, what are you doing? We want to continue with this on a bipartisan basis.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Again, our hour is concluding, but I think, in other words, we certainly are very interested, I certainly am, in making sure that the marketplace, the insurance marketplace, you are from Connecticut, so I am sure you have an interest in this, that it works; that in fact it is affordable, that we can figure out a way for businesses to work together, to be able to get a market share, to be able to maybe do some things on the individual marketplace so that in fact it can be more affordable.

Some of the ideas that the President has about tax deductions, not as substitutes, but for individual coverage, that's fine. We should be doing that. But not say, okay, which are going to make sure that 6 million children who have had access to health care, and another 6 million who could, who are now eligible but are not signed up, we are going to continue to deny them care, and we are going to do that by scaring you into thinking somehow we are creating some new expanded government program that is somehow just going to be evil.

That is sort of kind of what the President is saying, instead of saying wait a minute, this is an initiative that works. It works in every State. People are proud of it. Republicans and Democrats stand up and praise it, doctors are happy about it, hospitals are happy about it, parents are happy about it. I don't know how the kids feel when they get their immunizations, how happy they are about it.

But the fact is we are doing the right thing and we are meeting a priority that American families talk to us about all the time. And it is not instead of doing something else. It is really just because it is a high priority for us. It is always a question of priority, but we really I think, certainly what I want to say, we are determined to get this done, and we want to work in a bipartisan way to do it. We want to do it in a fiscally responsible way. We want to continue to build on the success of the Children's Health Insurance Program, and that is why we are going to keep talking about it until we get it done and hopefully be joined by not only our colleagues on the the other side, but the President as well.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Let me just add some final thoughts to add to the theme of inconsistency here. This is a President who has presided over the largest expansion of a government paid for health care program in my generation at least with the addition of the prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program. But it was okay when it resulted in a massive giveaway to the pharmaceutical industry.

But when we are asking to expand health care for kids who don't have, as Mr. PALLONE said, not only do they not vote, but they also don't have political action committees and they also don't have lobbyists patrolling the hallways here and within the administration. When it comes to helping the most vulnerable, the most voiceless group of individuals out there, this administration results in a deafening, deafening silence.

So I am so glad we are down here talking about this tonight. I came to Congress, gave up my seat working on a health care policy in the Connecticut legislature because I figured out that this really had to be a Federal fix, to try to do something for the millions of uninsured.

I frankly hope in a lot of places I think I am am going to depart from the legacy of the person I replaced, but on this I hope to be able to work with all of you to join back across the aisle and build that bipartisan consensus to stand up for those voiceless, lobbyistless PAC-less constituents of ours, uninsured kids.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. We have an enormous opportunity here. We want to meet that challenge and we want to do it right. So that is the challenge over the next few months. My guess is we are going to continue to talk about this for the weeks ahead, and certainly if we are lucky enough to take some vacation this summer and see those cute kids on the beach on the Jersey shore, and Connecticut has some nice beaches too, to look at them and think which ones of those, because there are, who don't have health insurance, whose parents may delay care that they should get, not get an immunization, should not get care, maybe not even treat some simple illness that ends up running through school or camp and everybody gets sick.

But this is about giving kids the right healthy start. It is about doing it in a cost-effective way, about being creative and innovative, and meeting that challenge that American families have every day.

So I thank my colleagues for joining me this evening, and I look forward to continuing to work with you. Thank you for your leadership, Mr. PALLONE, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the list of all groups who support the SCHIP package.

ALL GROUPS WHO SUPPORT SCHIP PACKAGE

SENIORS GROUPS

AARP

Alliance for Retired Americans

American Association for International Aging
American Society on Aging
Association of Jewish Aging Services of North America
B'nai B'rith
National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
National Association of State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs (NASOP)
National Association of RSVP Directors
National Association of Social Workers
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council On Aging
National Indian Council on Aging
OWL, The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
Medicare Rights Center
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Senior Citizens Law Center

PROVIDER GROUPS

American Dental Association
American Hospital Association
American Medical Association
American Health Care Association
Federation of American Hospitals
National Association for Home Care & Hospice
National Association of Community Health Centers
PhRMA

LABOR UNIONS

AFL-CIO
AFSCME Retiree Program
American Federation of Teachers
International Union, United Auto Workers
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Service Employees International Union
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
International Union, United Auto Workers
United Steelworkers

CHILDREN'S GROUPS

Academy of Pediatricians
Children's Defense Fund
Families USA
March of Dimes
National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions

DISABILITY GROUPS

AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition
AIDS Treatment Data Network
American Academy of HIV Medicine
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
American Network of Community Options and Resources
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)
Gay Men's Health Crisis
HIV Medicine Association
Council for Learning Disabilities
Easter Seals
NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities
National Association of People with AIDS
National Disability Rights Network
National Down Syndrome Society
The Arc of the United States

ADVOCACY GROUPS

Military Officers Association of America
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Campaign for America's Future
Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Consumer's Union
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Health Law Program
National Organization of Social Security Claimants' Representatives
National Respite Coalition
National Spinal Cord Injury Association
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Project Inform
Protestants for the Common Good
The American Federation of Teachers
Title II Community AIDS National Network (TII CANN)
United Cerebral Palsy
United Spinal Association
USAction

STATE AND LOCAL GROUPS

AIDS Action Baltimore, Inc.
AIDS Drug Assistance Protocol Fund
AIDS Education Global Information System
AIDS Legal Council of Chicago
AIDS Resource Alliance, Inc.
AIDS/HIV Health Alternatives
Alliance for Family Education Care & Treatment
California Health Advocates
Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York
Champaign County Branch NAACP
Chicago Women's AIDS Project
Clinical Social Work Guild 49
Coleman Global Telecommunications, LLC
Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP)
Community Information Center
Desert AIDS Project
Douglas County AIDS Project
Family Service Association of Bucks County HIV/AIDS Program
Florida Legal Services
F.O.U.N.D., Inc.
Friends of The Poor International
Georgia Rural Urban Summit
Health Equity Project
Hemophilia Association of New York
Hep C Advocate Network, Inc. (HepCAN)
HIV/AIDS Law Project
HIVictorious, Inc.
IndependenceFirst
International Foundation for Alternative Research in AIDS, Portland, OR
Kleine Editorial Services
La Fe Policy and Advocacy Center
L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center
Latinos for National Health Insurance
Living Hope Organization
Michigan Positive Action Coalition
NAMES Project Central New Jersey
NETWORTH/Positive Action
New Mexico Poz Coalition
New York AIDS Coalition
New York Legal Assistance Group
New York State Consumer Coalition on Part D
New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage
Northwest Health Law Advocates
Ohio AIDS Coalition
Pennsylvanians United for Single Payer Healthcare (PUSH)
Physicians for a National Health Program, NY Metro Chapter
Positive Opportunities, Inc.
Pueblo Family Physicians
Redwood AIDS Information Network and Services
Regional Addiction Prevention (RAP), Inc.
Regional AIDS Interfaith Network Colorado
Salt Lake Community Action Program
Search For A Cure
Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.
South Carolina Campaign to End AIDS (SC-C2EA)
Teamsters Retiree Club of Santa Clara County
Tennessee Justice Center
The Evangelical Catholic Diocese of the Northwest
The North American Old Catholic Church
The Richmond/Ermet AIDS Foundation
Topeka Independent Living Resource Center
Tia's Foundation
Triad Health Project
Twin States Network
Ursuline Sisters HIV/AIDS Ministry
West House, Inc.
West Oahu Hope For A Cure Foundation
Western

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BOUCHER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. TIAHRT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of attending an event in his district.

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 Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BISHOP of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CLARKE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SPRATT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, July 23.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and July 17, 18, and 19.

Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, today and July 17 and 18.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, July 23.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 975. An act granting the consent and approval of Congress to an interstate forest fire protection compact; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Ms. Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 556. An act to ensure national security while promoting foreign investment and the creation and maintenance of jobs, to reform the process by which such investments are examined for any effect they may have on national security, to establish the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced her signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1701. An act to provide for the extension of transitional medical assistance (TMA) and the abstinence education program through the end of fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, July 17, 2007, at 9 a.m., for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2502. A letter from the Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a supplemental update of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2008, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1106; (H. Doc. No. 110–46); to the Committee on the Budget and ordered to be printed.

2503. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting Copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2504. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, Transmittal No. 07-06, concerning the Department of the Air Force's proposed Letter(s)of Offer and Acceptance to United Arab Emirates for defense articles and services; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2505. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting pursuant to Section 62(a) of the Arms Export Control Act (AECA), notification concerning the Department of the Army's proposed lease of defense articles to the Government of Singapore (Transmittal No. 03-07); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

2506. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the thirty-sixth Semiannual Report to Congress on Audit Follow-Up, covering the period October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007 in compliance with the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2507. A letter from the Acting Executive Secretary, Agency for International Development, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2508. A letter from the Assistant Director, Executive & Political Personnel, Department of Defense, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2509. A letter from the Assoc. Gen. Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2510. A letter from the Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Semiannual Management Report to Congress for October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007, and the Inspector General's Semiannual Report for the same period, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2511. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Mgmt., Department of Labor, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2512. 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 Oversight and Government Reform.

2513. A letter from the Special Assistant to the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2514. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's Strategic Plan for FY 2007 to FY 2012; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2515. A letter from the Human Resources Management Office, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting the Commission's report on the use of the Category Rating System for each of the first three years following implementation of an alternative rating and selection procedure, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3319(d); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2516. A letter from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a semiannual report on Office of Inspector General auditing activity, together with a report providing management's perspective on the implementation status of audit recommendations, pursuant to Public Law 100-504, section 5; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2517. A letter from the General Counsel, National Labor Relations Board, transmitting the semiannual report on the activities of the Office of Inspector General of the National Labor Relations Board for the period October 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 8G(h)(2); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2518. A letter from the General Counsel, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

2519. A letter from the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, American Chemical Society, transmitting the Society's Annual Report and the Audited Finanical Statements for the years ended December 31, 2006 and 2005, pursuant to Public Law 88-504, section 3; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2520. 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 W.R. Grace in Erwin, Tennessee 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.

2521. 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 Los Alamos National Laboratory 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.

2522. 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 Dow Chemical Company site in Madison, Illinois 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.

2523. A letter from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's report on the activities of the review panel on prison rape in 2006, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 15603(c); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2524. A letter from the President, National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, transmitting the 2006 Annual Report of independent auditors who have audited the records of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 10101(b)(1) and 150909; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2525. A letter from the General Counsel, National Tropical Botanical Garden, transmitting the annual audit report of the National Tropical Botanical Garden for the period from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, pursuant to 36 U.S.C. 4610 Public Law 88-449, section 10(b); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2526. A letter from the Chief Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California, transmitting the 2006 Annual Report for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Central District of California; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

2527. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Clayton Fireworks, St. Lawrence River, Clayton, NY. [CGD09-07-039] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2528. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Papermill Island Fireworks, Baldwinsville, NY [CGD09-07-041] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2529. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Lake Erie Interclub Race, Presque Isle Bay, Erie, PA. [CGD09-07-044] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received

June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2530. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Tom Graves Memorial Fireworks, Port Bay, Wolcott, NY. [CGD09-07-047] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2531. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Peninsula Celebration Association Annual Fireworks Spectacular, San Francisco Bay, CA [COTP San Francisco Bay 07-024] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2532. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zones; Lake Tahoe Fireworks, Lake Tahoe, CA [COTP San Francisco Bay 07-023] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2533. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: Summer Solstice/US Chamber of Commerce Fireworks, Mystic Seaport, CT. (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2534. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Lesbian and Gay Community Center Fireworks, Fire Island Pines Harbor, NY. [CGD01-07-063] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2535. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; French Festival Fireworks, St. Lawrence River, Cape Vincent, NY [CGD09-07-042] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2536. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Thunder on Wheathouse Bay, St. Lawrence River, Ogdensburg, NY. [CGD09-07-046] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2537. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Rochester Harborfest, Genesee River and Lake Ontario, Rochester, NY [CGD09-07-045] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2538. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: Fireworks Displays in the Captain of the Port Puget Sound Zone [CGD13-07-017] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2539. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone: City of Long Beach Fireworks, Atlantic Ocean, Long Beach, NY. [CGD01-07-065] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2540. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Fireworks Extravaganza, City of Antioch, San Francisco Bay, CA [COTP San Francisco Bay 07-022] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2541. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce Fourth of July Fireworks Display, San Francisco Bay, CA [COTP San Francisco Bay 07-018] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

2542. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Administrative Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Safety Zone; City of San Francisco Fourth of July Fireworks Display, San Francisco Bay, CA [COTP San Francisco Bay 07-016] (RIN: 1625-AA00) received June 22, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

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. FRANK: Committee on Financial Services. H.R. 2547. A bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to prevent misrepresentation about deposit insurance coverage, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–234). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Ms. MATSUI: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 547. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes (Rept. 110–235). 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 Ms. SHEA-PORTER:

H.R. 3045. A bill to regulate the judicial use of presidential signing statements in the interpretation of Acts of Congress; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MCNULTY (for himself, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MCCRERY, Mr. STARK, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. WOLF, Mr. BECERRA, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. HASTINGS of Washington, Ms. MATSUI, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. FARR, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. FILNER, Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota, and Mr. HINCHEY):

H.R. 3046. A bill to amend the Social Security Act to enhance Social Security account number privacy protections, to prevent fraudulent misuse of the Social Security account number, and to otherwise enhance protection against identity theft, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LAMBORN (for himself, Mr. STUPAK, Mr. BUCHANAN, Mr. BOOZMAN, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr. HAYES, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MANZULLO, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. BILIRAKIS, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, and Mr. FORTUÑO):

H.R. 3047. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the processing of claims for benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. DINGELL:

H.R. 3048. A bill to provide for and approve the settlement of certain land claims of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. DUNCAN:

H.R. 3049. A bill to establish a pilot program for the expedited disposal of Federal real property; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN:

H.R. 3050. A bill to grant the consent and approval of Congress to an interstate forest fire protection compact; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, Mr. MCNULTY, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. CLAY, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. NADLER, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. LOBIONDO, Mr. KAGEN, Mr. EMANUEL, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. HALL of New York, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. HOOLEY, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. SIRES, Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PERLMUTTER, and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois):

H.R. 3051. A bill to improve the diagnosis and treatment of traumatic brain injury in members and former members of the Armed Forces, to review and expand telehealth and telemental health programs of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Armed Services, 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. SPACE (for himself, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. REGULA, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, Mrs. SCHMIDT, Mr. TURNER, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. SUTTON, Mr. JORDAN, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. KUCINICH, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. HOBSON, and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio):

H.R. 3052. A bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 954 Wheeling Avenue in Cambridge, Ohio, as the ''John Herschel Glenn, Jr. Post Office Building''; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

By Ms. WATERS (for herself, Mr. SENSENBRENNER, Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. DEFAZIO, Mr. GOODLATTE, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, and Mrs. DRAKE):

H.R. 3053. A bill to protect private property rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. WOLF (for himself, Mr. TERRY, Mrs. DRAKE, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MCNULTY, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. PITTS, Mr. WALSH of New York, Mr. OLVER, Ms. WATSON, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. CAPUANO, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. HONDA, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, Mr. STARK, Mr. CALVERT, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia):

H.R. 3054. A bill to establish a program to assist Sudanese refugees in the United States known as the ''Lost Boys and Lost Girls of Sudan'' to voluntarily return to southern Sudan to assist in reconstruction efforts in southern Sudan; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. YARMUTH (for himself and Mr. PLATTS):

H.R. 3055. A bill to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide expanded resources, technical assistance, reasonable accountability, and professional development to eligible entities implementing Even Start programs; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself, Mr. PENCE, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. ISSA, and Mr. BOUSTANY):

H. Res. 548. A resolution expressing the ongoing concern of the House of Representatives for Lebanon's democratic institutions and unwavering support for the administration of justice upon those responsible for the assassination of Lebanese public figures opposing Syrian control of Lebanon; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS:

H. Res. 549. A resolution recognizing the importance of America's Waterway Watch program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. HONDA (for himself and Mr. PAYNE):

H. Res. 550. A resolution congratulating the people of Ethiopia on the second millennium of Ethiopia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. JEFFERSON (for himself, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CLYBURN, Ms. KILPATRICK, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. BACA, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CLAY, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. WATT, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CUMMINGS, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. WYNN, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. REYES, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SIRES, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. FILNER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. BAIRD, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. MELANCON, and Mr. MCCRERY):

H. Res. 551. A resolution acknowledging the progress made and yet to be made to rebuild the Gulf Coast region after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions as follows:

H.R. 23: Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, Mr. TIBERI, and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.

H.R. 178: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 180: Mr. TIERNEY.

H.R. 346: Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. JINDAL, and Mr. CANNON.

H.R. 418: Mr. GONZALEZ, Ms. BERKLEY, and Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 657: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CARNEY, Ms. CARSON, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, and Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 687: Mr. FATTAH and Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.

H.R. 690: Ms. WOOLSEY.

H.R. 695: Mr. COSTELLO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mr. WEINER, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. CLARKE, and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 725: Mr. TERRY.

H.R. 734: Mr. MAHONEY of Florida.

H.R. 760: Mr. ROYCE, MR. BERMAN, and Mr. WALZ of Minnesota.

H.R. 784: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico and Mr. KELLER of Florida.

H.R. 826: Mr. GOODLATTE.

H.R. 840: Mr. UDALL of New Mexico, Mr. CAPUANO, and Ms. ESHOO.

H.R. 861: Ms. FOXX.

H.R. 864: Mr. BOUCHER and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 962: Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 1029: Mr. GINGREY and Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas.

H.R. 1038: Mr. CLAY.

H.R. 1043: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 1076: Mr. FATTAH.

H.R. 1125: Mr. COHEN, MS. KAPTUR, Mr. HALL of New York, Mr. CUMMINGS, MR. MICHAUD, and Mr. GONZALEZ.

H.R. 1228: Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota.

H.R. 1275: Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York.

H.R. 1320: Mr. COURTNEY.

H.R. 1330: Mr. KANJORSKI.

H.R. 1346: Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 1357: Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, Mr. SAXTON, Mrs. DRAKE, and Mr. GINGREY.

H.R. 1376: Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania and Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 1384: Mr. HUNTER, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. SCHIFF, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Ms. WATSON, and Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 1399: Ms. FOXX and Mr. TIAHRT.

H.R. 1400: Mr. LOEBSACK.

H.R. 1415: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 1416: Mr. LEWIS of Georgia and Mr. WAXMAN.

H.R. 1418: Mr. MCNULTY.

H.R. 1422: Mr. CALVERT and Mr. WEXLER.

H.R. 1464: Mr. MCHUGH.

H.R. 1466: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 1497: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 1509: Mr. NUNES.

H.R. 1514: Ms. CLARKE.

H.R. 1553: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts.

H.R. 1590: Ms. CLARKE.

H.R. 1632: Mr. SPACE, Mr. WILSON of Ohio, and Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 1713: Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. MARKEY, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mrs. TAUSCHER, and Mr. LEWIS of Georgia.

H.R. 1732: Mr. RUPPERSBERGER.

H.R. 1740: Mr. CAPUANO and Ms. MATSUI.

H.R. 1818: Mr. PAUL, Mr. GONZALEZ, and Mr. RADANOVICH.

H.R. 1964: Mr. CARNAHAN.

H.R. 2003: Mr. JEFFERSON.

H.R. 2005: Mr. YOUNG of Alaska.

H.R. 2027: Mr. PAUL.

H.R. 2050: Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas.

H.R. 2066: Mr. MARSHALL.

H.R. 2164: Mr. COHEN and Ms. DELAURO.

H.R. 2205: Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 2216: Mr. RUSH and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 2217: Mr. RUSH and Mr. GRIJALVA.

H.R. 2265: Mr. CROWLEY and Mr. MCDERMOTT.

H.R. 2266: Mr. OBERSTAR.

H.R. 2295: Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. PUTNAM, and Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 2303: Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 2325: Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS.

H.R. 2342: Mr. MCNERNEY.

H.R. 2364: Mr. KUCINICH.

H.R. 2464: Mr. CARNAHAN and Mr. HINCHEY.

H.R. 2478: Mr. LEVIN.

H.R. 2495: Mr. SPRATT and Mr. GORDON.

H.R. 2566: Mr. ABERCROMBIE.

H.R. 2585: Mr. BOUSTANY.

H.R. 2587: Mrs. BLACKBURN.

H.R. 2593: Mr. PASTOR.

H.R. 2596: Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. ROTHMAN, and Mr. WEINER.

H.R. 2606: Ms. SCHAKOWSKY and Mr. BOUCHER.

H.R. 2630: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2668: Mr. HASTINGS of Florida.

H.R. 2733: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2750: Mr. WOLF.

H.R. 2757: Mr. KIND.

H.R. 2758: Mr. SCHIFF, and Mr. CUMMINGS.

H.R. 2778: Mr. RANGEL.

H.R. 2818: Mr. WYNN, Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 2832: Mr. WYNN.

H.R. 2840: Mr. GUTIERREZ, and Mr. BISHOP of Georgia.

H.R. 2865: Mr. NADLER.

H.R. 2870: Ms. WATERS, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

H.R. 2892: Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Mr. ISRAEL.

H.R. 2902: Mr. MICHAUD.

H.R. 2903: Mr. MORAN of Virginia.

H.R. 2929: Mr. NADLER, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. MILLER of North Carolina, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. HARMAN, Ms. SOLIS, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. TAUSCHER, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. WATT, Mr. YARMUTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. SCOTT of Georgia, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.

H.R. 2933: Mr. SOUDER.

H.R. 2934: Mr. PAUL, Mr. WALBERG, and Mr. BARROW.

H.R. 2941: Mr. SPACE.

H.R. 2954: Mr. WAMP and Ms. FOXX.

H.R. 2966: Mr. LANTOS.

H.R. 3005: Mr. BOOZMAN.

H.R. 3008: Mr. CUELLAR and Mrs. CHRISTENSEN.

H.R. 3029: Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

H. Con. Res. 28: Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. PAUL, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. HENSARLING, Mr. TIBERI, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. KIND, and Mr. CARTER.

H. Con. Res. 49: Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CONAWAY, and Mr. LAHOOD.

H. Con. Res. 75: Mr. NADLER, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. WOLF, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. MOORE of Kansas.

H. Con. Res. 108: Ms. CLARKE.

H. Con. Res. 176: Mr. LAHOOD and Mr. LAMBORN.

H. Res. 111: Mr. SHULER, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CARDOZA, and Mr. FILNER.

H. Res. 121: Mr. FORTUÑO, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. DOGGETT, and Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota.

H. Res. 123: Mr. SHAYS.

H. Res. 143: Mr. HINCHEY and Mr. SKELTON.

H. Res. 146: Mr. CONYERS and Mr. NADLER.

H. Res. 345: Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.

H. Res. 351: Mr. SESSIONS.
H. Res. 356: Mr. KIRK.
H. Res. 407: Mr. PALLONE and Mr. MCGOVERN.
H. Res. 417: Mr. WYNN.
H. Res. 443: Mr. WELCH of Vermont, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. CASTOR, Mr. ARCURI, and Ms. SLAUGHTER.
H. Res. 457: Mr. MILLER of North Carolina.
H. Res. 487: Mr. SCOTT of Virginia.
H. Res. 499: Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mrs. ALTMIRE, Mr. PICKERING, and Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida.
H. Res. 529: Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia.
H. Res. 535: Mr. STUPAK, Mr. STARK, and Mr. GONZALEZ.
H. Res. 541: Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. BILBRAY, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. MCKEON, Mr. PUTNAM, Mr. KING of Iowa, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. FERGUSON, Mr. MCHENRY, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California, Mr. GILLMOR, Mr. TIBERI, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. HULSHOF, Mr. SMITH of Nebraska, Mr. MCCARTHY of California, Mr. REICHERT, Mr. GRAVES, Mr. PITTS, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. WALBERG, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mrs. CAPITO,
Mrs. BACHMANN, Mr. LATHAM, Mr. CULBERSON, and Mr. MANZULLO.

AMENDMENTS

Under clause 8 of rule XVIII, proposed amendments were submitted as follows:

H.R. 2641

OFFERED BY: MR. HENSARLING

AMENDMENT NO. 35: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

None of the funds in this Act may be used for the South Carolina HBCU Science and Technology initiative (SC).

H.R. 2641

OFFERED BY: MR. HENSARLING

AMENDMENT NO. 36: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

None of the funds in this Act may be used for the Environmental Science Center, University of Dubuque, IA.

H.R. 2641

OFFERED BY: MR. HENSARLING

AMENDMENT NO. 37: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

None of the funds in this Act may be used for the Emmanuel College Center for Science Partnership, MA.

H.R. 2641

OFFERED BY: MR. HENSARLING

AMENDMENT NO. 38: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

None of the funds in this Act may be used for Roosevelt University Biology Laboratory Equipment (IL).

H.R. 2641

OFFERED BY: MR. HENSARLING

AMENDMENT NO. 39: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

None of the funds in this Act may be used for Nanosys, Inc.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. CONAWAY

AMENDMENT NO. 1: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds made available by this Act for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program may be used while there continues in effect a Federal prohibition on the exploration, leasing, development, or production of oil or natural gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or the Outer Continental Shelf.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. CONAWAY

AMENDMENT NO. 2: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. It is the sense of the House of Representatives that any reduction in the amount appropriated by this Act achieved as a result of amendments adopted by the House should be dedicated to deficit reduction.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. GINGREY

AMENDMENT NO. 3: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following:

SEC. ____. None of the funds appropriated by this Act may be used by the Commissioner of Social Security or the Social Security Administration to pay the compensation of employees of the Social Security Administration to administer Social Security benefit payments, under any agreement between the United States and Mexico establishing totalization arrangments between the social security system established by title II of the Social Security Act and the social security system of Mexico, which would not otherwise be payable but for such agreement.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. PRICE OF GEORGIA

AMENDMENT NO. 4: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. ____. Appropriations made in this Act are hereby reduced in the amount of $1,517,480,000.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. SESSIONS

AMENDMENT NO. 5: Strike section 111.

H.R. 3043

OFFERED BY: MR. JORDAN OF OHIO

AMENDMENT NO. 6: At the end of the bill (before the short title), insert the following new section:

SEC. ____. Each amount appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act that is not required to be appropriated or otherwise made available by a provision of law is hereby reduced by 4.6 percent.

United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153 WASHINGTON, MONDAY, JULY 16, 2007 No. 113

Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord God Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, Creator of humanity, bless our lawmakers today as they seek to do Your will. Guide them through this day by Your higher wisdom. Answer every prayer in this Chamber uttered or unexpressed, according to each particular need.

As our Senators labor, help them to move with alacrity, to be patient when they must wait, and to make decisions only when Your answer has become clear. Guard their hearts and minds with a peace that passes understanding.

We pray in the Redeemer's Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JACK REED 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.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 16, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JACK REED, a Senator from the State of Rhode Island, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. REED thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the Senate will be in a period of morning business. I ask unanimous consent that it be a full hour of morning business because I am going to have to go into a quorum call in a minute to wait for one of my colleagues to come. We have some business to transact in the Senate, and I want to make sure there is somebody here to do that. So I ask unanimous consent that there be a full hour of morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Today, when we finish morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Department of Defense authorization bill. As we announced, there will be no rollcall votes tonight. This is the only Monday or Friday during this work period there will be no rollcall votes, unless we are able to get work done that we do not expect to get done that soon.

The amount of work we have to do this work period is significant. As I have indicated, we want to do what we can to finish this Defense authorization bill. We want to do the Homeland Security appropriations bill. We want to be able to complete reconciliation, which is for higher education. We have SCHIP, for which there is a bipartisan agreement that will be reported out of the committee, I understand, tomorrow, which has been worked on for weeks and weeks by Senators BAUCUS, GRASSLEY, ROCKEFELLER, and HATCH. They have agreed on a bipartisan arrangement. In fact, it may have been—I do not know if it was reported out last week, but I do know there is good bipartisan support on that legislation. Some people believe it is not enough money, the $35 billion, some think it is too much, but it is bipartisan, and Senator HATCH has contacted the President, that the President would reconsider his threat to veto that bill.

We also have to do the 9/11 Commission recommendations conference report. It is my understanding the House is going to appoint conferees on that today. There has been a lot of work done preconference on that with Democrats and Republicans working together. I think that will work out very well.

We still have the holdup with the ethics and lobbying reform. I do hope we can get that done. We will get it done. It may take a number of cloture votes, but we are going to finish that before the August recess. It would be to the advantage of everyone here to get that done. The staff of Senator MCCONNELL and my staff have worked very hard to see what they can do to help the various committees that are involved in this issue. It is now being held up. I hope this can be worked out. I have reached out to Senator DEMINT, who is the person at this stage holding it up on behalf of the Republicans. He, at this stage, has not been willing to change his position, which is very unfortunate because it is important we work out the earmarking provisions in this bill in conference. We cannot jam something into the process here, where you have the House with one rule, the Senate with another rule, and you go to conference and you wind up in no-man's land. We have to work out something.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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Everyone acknowledges we need earmark reform, and the Appropriations Committee has been following that this year. Senators BYRD and COCHRAN have made that direction, even though the legislation has not been completed. But in the meantime, we do not have lobbying and ethics reform, which is long past due. So I hope we can work together to complete our work in a timely fashion; otherwise, it will be finished in an untimely fashion because we are going to finish all this work before we have our August recess.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I withhold that suggestion.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have been reminded by staff that of our 30 minutes the Democrats are allotted of the 60 minutes, 30 minutes of our time—in fact, all of it—be given to Senator FEINSTEIN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, after 52 months—about 210 weeks—and about 1,500 days, America finds itself mired in one of the most tragic foreign policy blunders in our Nation's history. The sad part about it is, there is no end in sight. In my view, and that of academics and others, it will take years, and even decades, to finally close the book on the damage this war has caused our troops, our economy, and our moral standing in the world.

On May 24, 2007, President Bush said:

> We are there at the invitation of the Iraqi government. This is a sovereign nation. Twelve million people went to the polls to approve a constitution. It's their government's choice. If they were to say leave, we would leave.

That is the quote of President Bush.

This weekend, Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki—for whom President Bush has expressed consistent support and confidence—said that Iraqi forces could take control of their security at ''any time'' American troops want to leave or were to leave.

A recent poll of the Iraqi people showed that 21 percent think the American presence makes their country safer, while 69 percent say it puts them, the Iraqi people, at greater risk. That is what the Iraqis say.

The Iraqi people and their leaders say they are ready for us to end our combat operation. I think it is time we listen to them.

In the war's soon to be 5 years, our troops have accomplished everything they have been asked to do. They took down the Iraqi dictator. They secured the country for not one, not two, but three elections. They provided the security needed for Iraqi factions to come together to negotiate peaceful settlement of their differences.

But the Iraqi leaders have not done their part. After these 52 months: more than 3,600 Americans killed, tens of thousands wounded, and after nearly $600 billion of American taxpayer dollars spent. And after this sacrifice—52 months of sacrifice—it is long past time for the Iraqi leaders and the Iraqi people to put their words into action by taking responsibility for their own future. After 52 months, more than 3,600 Americans killed, tens of thousands wounded, and nearly 600 billion in taxpayer dollars spent, President Bush continues to tell our troops and all Americans that we should wait it out, just stay the course. After 52 months, our troops and our security cannot afford the President's ''run-out-the-clock'' strategy.

We have an opportunity and an obligation to change course in Iraq right now. We can remove our brave troops from the front lines of another country's civil war, a conflict we have no business policing and little chance to diffuse. We can conduct the kind of tough and strong diplomacy required to stabilize Iraq and the region, which even the President's own military experts plead with him to revise. Remember, General Petraeus has said the war cannot be won militarily. We can refocus our resources and fight a real war on terror that drives the terrorists back to the darkest caves and corners of the Earth.

We can choose that path now. We don't have to mark time waiting for the President to wake up one morning with a change of heart or his term to run out. We don't have to wait 2 more months for an arbitrary September deadline when it is so clear a course change is required and required now. With our courage and our votes, we can rise above the tragic failure to deliver a new course that our brave troops and all Americans demand and deserve. We can do that today by voting for the Levin-Reed amendment to the Defense authorization bill.

What does Levin-Reed do? It sets a firm date and an end date to transition the mission and begin the reduction of U.S. forces beginning 120 days after enactment and completed by April 30 of 2008. Levin-Reed limits the U.S. military mission after April 30 to counterterrorism; the training of Iraqi security forces and protection of U.S. personnel and assets; requires that the reduction in forces be part of a comprehensive, diplomatic, regional, political, and economic effort; and appoints an international mediator to bring together the warring factions. That provision dealing with appointing an international mediator to bring together warring factions was newly placed in the bill. The idea and the language came from Senator HAGEL of Nebraska and is a great addition to this amendment.

To those who say this language is binding on the President, I say it is, and that is what it is meant to be. It is binding because the President has resisted every effort we have made to work with him to change the direction of his failed Iraq policy. The record will show that binding language was not our first choice. We passed legislation requiring that 2006 be a year of transition. Instead, the President ignored this language and dug us in even deeper into an intractable civil war. We gave the President a chance to develop his own new course as Commander in Chief. He refused to do that. Instead, he chose to extend deployments and ask even more of our brave men and women in uniform.

Earlier this year we passed legislation that would have begun the phased redeployment while leaving significant discretion to the President about how and when to execute the redeployment. Instead, the President vetoed this bill and asserted that only he had the power to set war policy, even though we have a constitutional obligation to do so.

So the record is clear, the President's decision to stubbornly cling to the current course leaves this body no choice but to enact binding language. He has failed to lead us out of Iraq. We are ready to show him the way.

I am going to propound a unanimous consent. I have the greatest respect for my friend, the distinguished junior Senator from Arizona, but I say that I am going to enforce the rule that when I propound this, the distinguished Senator from Arizona should either agree to it or object. This is not the time for speeches because if he objects to it, I have more to say.

So I ask unanimous consent that if the House further amends H.R. 1 with the text of H.R. 1401 and requests a conference with the Senate—Mr. President, I misread the first line. I ask unanimous consent that if the House further amends H.R. 1 with the text of H.R. 1401 and requests a conference with the Senate, that the Senate agree to the request and appoint the same conferees which the Senate has already appointed to H.R. 1.

Mr. KYL addressed the Chair.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if the Senator could withhold.

I withdraw the unanimous consent request.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The unanimous consent request is withdrawn.

Mr. REID. I apologize to my friend. It was the wrong unanimous consent request.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President we had a shuffling of unanimous consent requests, and obviously the wrong one was shuffled to me. I apologize for holding up my friends.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUESTS—AMENDMENT NO. 1401

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the second-degree amendment to the Levin-Reed amendment be withdrawn and that there be 6 hours of debate on the Levin-Reed amendment; at the conclusion or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the Levin-Reed amendment with no second-degree amendments in order thereto.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I apologize. If I could ask the distinguished leader, was this with respect to the Levin-Reed amendment No. 1401?

Mr. REID. Yes. I did propound that request asking, basically, that we have an up-or-down vote on it. I have suggested 6 hours, but we would take any reasonable time.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, if I could respond, and reserving the right to object, I assume that if the Cornyn amendment, which was designed to be a side-by-side amendment, and the Levin-Reed amendment could both be voted on and both had a 60-vote threshold, a time agreement could be worked out. I ask the majority leader, could the unanimous consent request be modified to incorporate that principle so that there wouldn't have to be cloture, but there could be a vote on both of those amendments?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have said earlier that we had to file cloture on the initial amendment of Senator JIM WEBB, which was an amendment that simply called for the proper rotation of our troops: 15 months in country, 15 months out of country. We wanted the Senate to speak its will on that with a simple majority, and we were unable to get it. We feel the same way about Levin-Reed. It is a very important policy decision this Senate needs to make. Not to change—I don't know what Cornyn is, but I am sure it is something that is much different than Levin-Reed. Therefore, if there is a suggestion that I amend my unanimous consent request to have some side-by-side, 60-vote margins, I would object to that. I believe we should have in that instance an up-or-down vote. I have no problem giving Senator CORNYN a majority vote, which I think would be very appropriate. I think that is where we need to be on this issue; that is, this issue of the Defense authorization bill. It is very unusual to have on the Defense authorization bill, even issues dealing with Iraq—in times passed, we haven't had a 60-vote margin.

So I would not accept my friend's suggestion that there be side by sides. I renew my request that there be a time for an up-or-down vote on the Levin-Reed amendment. I have suggested 6 hours.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Yes, Mr. President, unfortunately, under that circumstance, I object.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I want to express my apology to my friends because I held them up for a few minutes on their being able to speak. I apologize for that, but they do have a full hour.

Mr. President, my worst fears on this bill, the Defense authorization bill, have been realized. We have just seen the Republican leadership again resort to this technical maneuver to block progress on this crucial amendment. It would be one thing for the minority to vote against this bill. If they honestly believe that ''stay the course'' is the right strategy, they have the right to vote no. Now Republicans are using a filibuster to block us from even voting on the amendment that could bring this war to a responsible end. They are blocking this like they did the Webb amendment. They are protecting the President rather than protecting our troops by denying us an up-or-down, yes-or-no vote on the most important issue our country faces.

So I say through you to my Democratic and Republican colleagues that we are going to work on this amendment until we get an up-or-down vote on it. If that means staying in session—we have no votes, of course, tonight, but if it means staying in session all day tomorrow and all tomorrow night, that is what we will have to do. I will file cloture so that we can have a Wednesday vote, if this continues. I certainly hope during the next few hours and tomorrow that we will have a change of mind so we can have a vote and then move on to the other amendments. The American people deserve an honest debate on this war and deserve an up-or-down vote on this amendment which we believe will bring a responsible end to this intractable war in Iraq.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 1

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have another unanimous-consent request, and this is the one I tried to offer earlier. I ask unanimous consent that if the House further amends H.R. 1 with the text of H.R. 1401 and requests a conference with the Senate, the Senate agree to the request and appoint the same conferees which the Senate has already appointed to H.R. 1.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SALAZAR). Is there objection?

Mr. KYL. Reserving the right to object, we have already agreed to the previous consent to go to conference on the 9/11 Commission legislation. We have named conferees on the part of the Senate.

As I understand it, the House wants to add a new bill to the conference, which includes provisions that were not included in either Chambers' 9/11 bill. I am not familiar with all the provisions of H.R. 1401, but I know the Senate has not acted on that bill, and we don't believe it was part of the 9/11 Commission recommendations.

Having said that, we need to object to this request at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I understand there has been an informal agreement that I would have up to 15 minutes, and Senator FEINSTEIN would then have 30 minutes. I would like to propound this as a unanimous consent agreement and also add that Senator ALLARD speak after that; that if there is time remaining from the time Senator ALLARD and I have of the 30 minutes, that be reserved for any other Republican Senator who may wish to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DETAINEES IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I wish to address a subject that I hope we will be able to address soon and that is an amendment that Senator GRAHAM of South Carolina has filed and, hopefully, we will debate soon. It relates to conditions that have been placed in the underlying bill, relating to the treatment of detainees captured in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to think very carefully about the damage that would

be brought on the global war against terrorists and future wars that we may have to fight if we go forward with the language that is in the bill, specifically in section 1023 of the bill. That essentially would return us to a law enforcement approach to terrorists that, frankly, failed us before 9/11 and, once Osama bin Laden and others declared war on us, would obviously not work in the post-9/11 context.

Senator GRAHAM's amendment strikes these harmful provisions in the bill and would replace them with commonsense measures to provide a more fair process in dealing with detainees at Guantanamo. I remind my colleagues for a moment about the nature of these terrorists whom we are talking about, and then I will go through specific provisions of the bill that need to be removed—specifically three: a requirement that al-Qaida terrorists held in Iraq and Afghanistan be given lawyers; the authorization to demands discovery and compel testimony from servicemembers; and the requirement that al-Qaida and Taliban detainees be provided access to classified evidence.

To review the nature of the detainees that we are holding, not just at Guantanamo Bay but also in Iraq and Afghanistan, these are not nice people. At least 30 of the detainees released from Guantanamo Bay have since returned to waging war against the United States and our allies; 12 of these released detainees have been killed in battle by U.S. forces and others have been recaptured; two released detainees became regional commanders for Taliban forces; one released detainee attacked U.S. and allied soldiers in Afghanistan, killing three Afghan soldiers; one released detainee killed an Afghan judge; one released detainee led a terrorist attack on a hotel in Pakistan and a kidnapping raid that resulted in the death of a Chinese civilian, and this former detainee recently told Pakistani journalists he planned to ''fight America and its allies until the very end.''

The provisions of section 1023 would make it very difficult, if not impossible, for the United States to detain these committed terrorists who have been captured while waging war against us. No nation has, in the history of armed conflict, imposed the kinds of limits that the bill would impose on its ability to detain enemy war prisoners. War prisoners released in the middle of an ongoing conflict, such as members of al-Qaida, will return to waging war. We have already seen this happen 30 times with detainees released from Guantanamo Bay. If section 1023 of the bill is enacted into law, we could expect that number to increase sharply. If section 1023 is enacted, we should expect that more civilians and Afghans and Iraqi soldiers will be killed, and it may be inevitable that our own soldiers will be injured or killed by such released terrorists. This is a price our Nation should not be forced to bear.

Let me talk first about the requirement in the bill that al-Qaida terrorists held in Iraq and Afghanistan must be provided with lawyers. This cannot be executed. It would require the release of detainees. Here is why: The Defense bill requires that counsel be provided and trials be conducted for all unlawful enemy combatants held by the United States, including, for example, al-Qaida members captured and detained in Iraq and Afghanistan if they are held for 2 years. We hold approximately 800 prisoners in Afghanistan and tens of thousands in Iraq. None of them are lawful combatants and all would arguably be entitled to a trial and a lawyer under the bill. Such a provision would at least require a military judge, a prosecutor, and a defense attorney, as well as other legal professionals.

That scheme is not realistic. The entire Army JAG Corps only consists of approximately 1,500 officers, and each is busy with their current duties. Moreover, under the bill, each detainee would be permitted to retain a private or volunteer counsel. Our agreements with the Iraqi Government bar the United States from transferring Iraqi detainees out of Iraq. As a result, the bill would require the United States to train and transport and house and protect potentially thousands, or even tens of thousands, of private lawyers in the middle of a war zone during ongoing hostilities. That is impossible.

That proposal is half baked at best. It would likely force the United States to release thousands of enemy combatants in Iraq, giving them the ability to resume waging war against the United States. Obviously, this would tie up our military. By requiring a trial for each detainee, this provision would also require U.S. soldiers to offer statements to criminal investigators, needing later to prove their case after they captured someone. They would need to carry some kind of evidence kits or combat cameras or some other method of preserving the evidence and to establish its chain of custody. They would need to spend hours after each trial writing afteraction reports, which would need to be reviewed by commanders. Valuable time would be taken away from combat operations and soldiers' rest.

It would be a bad precedent for the future. Aside from the war in Iraq, this provision would make fighting a major war in the future simply impossible. Consider this: During World War II, the United States detained over 2 million enemy war prisoners. It would have been impossible for the United States to have conducted a trial and provided counsel to 2 million captured enemy combatants. So the bottom line is that the bill, as written, would likely be impossible to implement in Iraq and, in the context of past wars, it is patently absurd.

The second point is authorizing al-Qaida detainees to demand discovery and compel testimony from American soldiers. The underlying bill would actually authorize unlawful enemy combatants, including al-Qaida detained in Iraq and Afghanistan, to demand discovery and could compel testimony from witnesses as we do in our criminal courts in the United States. The witnesses would be the U.S. soldiers who captured the prisoner. Under this bill, an American soldier could literally be recalled from his unit at the whim of an al-Qaida terrorist in order to be cross-examined by a judge or that terrorist.

Newspaper columnist Stewart Taylor describes the questions that such a right would raise:

> Should a Marine sergeant be pulled out of combat in Afghanistan to testify at a detention hearing about when, where, how, and why he had captured the detainee? What if the northern alliance or some other ally made the capture? Should the military be ordered to deliver high-level al-Qaida prisoners to be cross-examined by other detainees and their lawyers?

The questions abound. As the Supreme Court observed in Johnson v. Eisenstrager, which is the law on this subject:

> It would be difficult to devise a more effective fettering of a field commander than to allow the very enemies he is ordered to reduce to submission to call him to account in his own civil court and divert his efforts and attention from the military offensive abroad to the legal defensive at home.

That is what the U.S. Supreme Court said in World War II when a similar issue was raised. It would be difficult to conceive of a process that would be more insulting to our soldiers. In addition, many al-Qaida members who were captured in Afghanistan were captured by special operators whose identities are kept secret for obvious reasons. This would force them to reveal themselves to al-Qaida members, therefore exposing themselves or to simply forgo the prosecution of the individual, which is more likely what would happen.

Clearly, Americans should not be subject to subpoena by al-Qaida. That brings me to the last point—the requirement that al-Qaida and Taliban detainees be provided with access to classified evidence. The bill requires that detainees be provided with ''a sufficiently specific substitute of classified evidence'' and that detainees' private lawyers be given access to all relevant classified evidence.

Foreign and domestic intelligence agencies are already very hesitant to divulge classified evidence to the CSRT hearings we currently conduct. These are part of the internal and nonadversarial military process today. Intelligence agencies will inevitably refuse to provide sensitive evidence to detainees and their lawyers. They will not risk compromising such information for the sake of detaining an individual terrorist.

In addition, the United States already has tenuous relations with some of the foreign governments, particularly in the Middle East, that have

been our best sources of intelligence about al-Qaida. If we give detainees a legal right to access such information, these foreign governments may simply shut off all further supply of information to the United States. These governments will not want to compromise their evidence or expose the fact that they cooperated with the United States. By exposing our cooperation with these governments, the bill perversely applies a sort of ''stop snitching'' policy toward our Middle Eastern allies, which is likely to be as effective as when applied to criminal street gangs in the United States.

A final point on this: We already know from hard experience that providing classified and other sensitive information to al-Qaida members is a bad idea. During the 1995 Federal prosecution in New York of the ''Blind Sheikh,'' Omar Rahman, prosecutors turned over the names of 200 unindicted coconspirators to the defense. The prosecutors were required to do so under the civilian criminal justice system of discovery rules, which require that large amounts of evidence be turned over to the defense. The judge warned the defense that the information could only be used to prepare for trial and not for other purposes. Nevertheless, within 10 days of being turned over to the defense, the information found its way to Sudan and into the hands of Osama bin Laden. U.S. District Judge Michael Mukasey, who presided over the case, explained, ''That list was in downtown Khartoum within 10 days, and bin Laden was aware within 10 days that the Government was on his trail.''

That is what happens when you provide classified information in this context.

In another case tried in the civilian criminal justice system, testimony about the use of cell phones tipped off terrorists as to how the Government was monitoring their networks. According to the judge, ''There was a piece of innocuous testimony about the delivery of a battery for a cell phone.'' This testimony alerted terrorists to Government surveillance and, as a result, their communication network shut down within days and intelligence was lost to the Government forever—intelligence that might have prevented who knows what.

This bill—this particular section of the bill repeats the mistakes of the past. Treating the war with al-Qaida similar to a criminal justice investigation would force the United States to choose between compromising information that could be used to prevent future terrorist attacks and letting captured terrorists go free. This is not a choice that our Nation should be required to make.

I will talk more about some provisions that Senator GRAHAM would like to substitute for these provisions that provide a more fair process for detainees held at Guantanamo Bay—a process that would enable them to have greater benefit of the use of counsel and of evidence in their CSRT hearings.

I will wait until he actually offers that amendment to get into detail. But the point is, we have bent over backward to provide the detainees at Guantanamo the ability to contest their detention and to have that detention reviewed and eventually have it reviewed in U.S. courts. That is a very fair system, more fair than has ever been provided by any other nation under similar circumstances and more than the Constitution requires. So we are treating the people we captured and are holding at Guantanamo in a very fair way.

What we cannot do is take those same kinds of protections and apply them to anybody we capture in a foreign theater who is held in a foreign theater and therefore is not, under current circumstances—and never has been in the history of warfare—subject to the criminal justice system of our country. To take that system and try to transport it to the fields of Afghanistan or Iraq would obviously be not only a breaking of historical precedent but a very bad idea for all of the reasons I just indicated.

I ask my colleagues to give very careful consideration to the dangerous return to the pre-9/11 notion of terrorism as a law enforcement problem that is inherent in section 1023 of the bill. The terrorists have made no secret that they are actually at war with us, and we ignore this point at our peril.

I conclude by reminding my colleagues that the Statement of Administration Policy on this bill indicates that the President would be advised to veto it if these provisions remained. Therefore, I urge my colleagues, when the opportunity is presented, to join me in striking the provisions of the bill, not only as representing good policy but to help us ensure that at the end of the day, there will be a bill signed by the President called the Defense authorization bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I believe I have a half hour to speak in morning business. Prior to doing so, I wish to give a brief rejoinder to my colleague from Arizona on some of the comments he just made.

It is my understanding that the underlying Defense Authorization Act has several provisions that are necessary to address shortcomings in the legal process for individuals detained on the battlefield. One of these provisions limits the use of coerced testimony obtained through cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment. Such testimony is immoral, and this provision is necessary if we are to obtain and use accurate information.

Another provision provides for reasonable counsel and the ability to present relevant information to detainees who have been held for 2 or more years. This is necessary in a war of undetermined duration.

Finally, the bill does not provide classified information to a detainee. It provides for a summary that is intended to be unclassified to the counsel for detainees.

One of the things that might help is if, on line 16, page 305, subsection II, the word ''unclassified'' was added before the word ''summary'' on that line. I believe that is the intent.

GUANTANAMO BAY

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, many in this body and people all over the world watched as America, 5½ years ago, began to arrest, apprehend, and incarcerate detainees. Some were real terrorists, some were conspirators, and some were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. We watched as Camp X-Ray was built at the naval base at Guantanamo, and we have seen the development of a different and lesser standard of American justice developed for proceedings at that base. Since that time, Guantanamo has been derided as a blight on human rights values and as a stain on American justice worldwide.

I believe the time has come to close Guantanamo. An amendment I have filed with Senator HARKIN—Senator HARKIN is my main cosponsor—and Senator HAGEL would do exactly that. It is cosponsored by Senators DODD, CLINTON, BROWN, BINGAMAN, KENNEDY, WHITEHOUSE, OBAMA, DURBIN, BYRD, yourself, Mr. President, Senator SALAZAR, SENATORS FEINGOLD, BOXER, and BIDEN.

It is my understanding that the Republican side has refused us a time agreement, which means we will not be allowed a vote. The amendment is not germane postcloture. So if the Republican side will not allow us a time agreement, we have, unfortunately, no way of getting a vote on this amendment.

The fact is that yesterday's New York Times editorialized that Guantanamo should be closed. That is what many people believe, and yet we cannot fully debate that issue and vote on it here. I think that is truly a shame.

I very much regret this, but Senator HARKIN, Senator HAGEL, and I wish to take some time to address this issue. I assure this body that we will not stop here, but we will find another venue in which to debate and vote on this matter.

The amendment we have proposed would require the President to close the Guantanamo detention facility within 1 year, and it provides the administration flexibility to choose the venue in which to try detainees—in military proceedings, Federal district courts, or both. The administration would choose which maximum security facilities in which to house them.

Why should we close the Guantanamo detention facility? First and foremost, this administration's decision to create Guantanamo appears to have been part of a plan to create a

sphere of limited law outside the scrutiny of American courts that would result in a lesser standard of justice.

Guantanamo is unique. It is not sovereign territory of the United States; however, under a 1903 lease, the United States exercises complete jurisdiction and control over this naval base. I believe the administration hoped to use this distinction to operate without accountability at Guantanamo.

This is revealed in a December 2001 Office of Legal Counsel memo by John Yoo of the Justice Department, who later authored the infamous torture memo. Yoo knew there was a risk that courts would reject the legal theory of unaccountability at Guantanamo, but, just as he did with his torture memo, he laid out the various arguments why his extreme views might prevail.

Let me point this out. In his memo, he says:

> Finally, the executive branch has repeatedly taken the position under various statutes that [Guantanamo] is neither part of the United States nor a possession or territory of the United States. For example, this Office [Justice] has opined that [Guantanamo] is not part of the ''United States'' for purposes of the Immigration and Naturalization Act. . . .Similarly, in 1929, the Attorney General opined that [Guantanamo] was not a ''possession'' of the United States within the meaning of certain tariff acts.

The memo concludes with this statement:

> For the foregoing reasons, we conclude that a district court cannot properly entertain an application for a writ of habeas corpus by an enemy alien detained at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba. Because the issue has not yet been definitively resolved by the courts, however, we caution that there is some possibility that a district court would entertain such an application.

So here the administration apparently hoped to turn Guantanamo into a legal hybrid wholly under U.S. control but beyond the reach of U.S. courts.

What has happened since then? The Supreme Court rejected the administration's position in Rasul v. Bush in a 2004 ruling that American courts do have jurisdiction to hear habeas and other claims from detainees held at Guantanamo.

Following another defeat in the Supreme Court, in Hamdan v. Rumsfeld in 2006, which declared invalid the Pentagon's process for adjudicating detainees, the administration responded by pushing the passage of a new Military Commissions Act. This expressly eliminated habeas corpus rights and limited other appeals to procedure and constitutionality, leaving questions of fact or violation of law unresolvable by all Federal courts. This happens nowhere else in American law. But this Military Commissions Act went through.

There are serious questions about whether this provision will withstand a court test. On June 29, just 2 weeks ago, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear two additional cases which go right to this point: Boumediene v. Bush and Al Odah v. the United States. The High Court declined to hear these cases in April but has reversed itself and granted certiorari—the first time in 60 years that it agreed to take a case after previously refusing it. From this case, we will find out whether the military commissions law, which prevents full appeals, in fact, can stand the court test.

What is the administration arguing in that case? Once again, they are trying to argue that the Constitution's protection of habeas corpus does not extend to detainees at Guantanamo because it is outside of U.S. jurisdiction.

I believe it is time to put an end to these efforts to use a legal maneuver to create a law-free zone at Guantanamo.

As Justice Kennedy emphasized in his concurring opinion in Rasul:

> Guantanamo is in every practical respect a United States territory.

So U.S. law would apply at Guantanamo whether this administration likes that or not.

The administration's efforts to create a land without law at Guantanamo has been a moral and a strategic catastrophe for the United States. The bad decision to create a separate system of justice at Guantanamo led to another mistake, and I mentioned this briefly: the Military Commissions Act. In retrospect, let's look at what that act has done:

It expands Presidential authority by giving the White House broad latitude to interpret the meaning and authority of the Geneva Conventions.

It presents vague and ambiguous definitions of torture and cruel and inhumane treatment that fail to establish clear guidelines for what is a permissible interrogation technique.

It abandons the independent judicial review process by establishing a new Court of Military Commission Review with members appointed by the Pentagon. This court has yet to be established.

It limits appeals to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which is given limited review authority. This is what will most likely be before the court very shortly.

For the first time in U.S. history, it allows coerced evidence—obtained prior to December 30, 2005—to be entered into a court record, and it revokes habeas corpus rights that allowed detainees to appeal their status before the Federal court.

Direct review is limited and habeas is eliminated by this military commissions bill.

Clearly, the military commissions bill, which passed by a vote of 65 to 34 in this House, seeks to once again set up a separate and lesser standard of justice.

Senator SPECTER and Senator LEAHY have introduced a bill to restore habeas rights to Guantanamo detainees. I hope that bill is allowed to be presented as an amendment to this bill. It is timely, it is important, and the world is watching. It should happen, and finally, it is the right thing to do.

So what have been all the consequences of this? The detention center at Guantanamo Bay has become a lightning rod for international condemnation. It draws sharp criticism from our allies and hands our enemies a potent recruiting tool. It weakens our standing in the world and makes the world a more dangerous place for our troops, who may be captured on foreign battlefields in the future.

Yet the administration fails to act, despite public comments from President Bush and top advisers that the facility should be closed. Recent news reports say there is renewed debate inside the White House over closing Guantanamo, but still nothing happens. So I believe it is up to Congress to act.

What would this amendment do? In addition to requiring the President to close Guantanamo within a year, it would prohibit the administration from transferring detainees at Guantanamo to other U.S.-controlled facilities outside the United States. It also requires the President to keep Congress informed of efforts to close the facility and transfer the detainees, and includes the specific requirement that the President report to Congress in writing within 3 months of the bill's enactment.

I believe it is critical that we act. To do nothing, to leave Guantanamo open, as some in the administration would like, is to invite further condemnation and further risk. It will weaken our efforts to fight terrorism and it will continue to erode our standing in the world.

I recently heard Peter Bergen, a terrorism expert, on CNN. I have read his books and listened to him throughout the years. He said he and his colleagues had taken a good look at the increase in terror and he believed it would be fair to assert that our presence in Iraq has served to increase terrorists by sevenfold—by 700 percent over what the world of terrorists was before Iraq and today.

The simple fact remains that Guantanamo violates our values and our traditions, including respect for the rule of law and for human rights.

In avoiding the full weight of American justice, Guantanamo has shocked the conscience of the world. It has led the men and women who have worn the uniform, including many retired flag officers, to speak out. A dozen former generals and admirals warned in January of 2005 that the interrogation techniques allowed at Guantanamo and elsewhere had:

> . . . fostered greater animosity toward the United States, undermined our intelligence gathering efforts, and added to the risks facing our troops around the world.

Among those who commented were GEN John Shalikashvili, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs; GEN Merrill McPeak, former Air Force Chief of Staff; Marine GEN Joseph Hoar, a former commander of the U.S. Central Command; and RADM Dan Guter, a former Navy judge advocate general.

Earlier this year, a very respected retired Marine Corps general, by the

name of James Jones, the former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, said:

> I would close the prison tomorrow. I would do it immediately. Just the images alone have hurt our national reputation. I don't know how you fix that without closing it.

I agree with him. I don't know how you begin to fix the damage brought by Guantanamo without closing it. A military commissions bill couldn't do it. We can't do it, and that is the fact.

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell said it succinctly:

> I would close it not tomorrow, but this afternoon.

But importantly, the sense of conscience, as well as a measure of the international reaction to Guantanamo, came in a statement by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Here is what he said:

> I never imagined I would live to see the day when the United States and its satellites would use precisely the same arguments that the apartheid government used for detention without trial. It is disgraceful.

In May of 2006, President Bush told German television:

> I would very much like to end Guantanamo. I would very much like to get people to a court.

Earlier this year, Defense Secretary Bob Gates, new to his job, made clear that he also wanted Guantanamo closed. He said:

> There is no question in my mind that Guantanamo and some of the abuses that have taken place in Iraq have negatively impacted the reputation of the United States.

He said that at the Munich Conference on Security Policy earlier this year. On February 27, following an Appropriations Committee meeting, I personally asked him what he thought, and he said, equally as succinctly as General Powell, that he thought it should be closed.

The following month Secretary Gates told the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee that trials at Guantanamo would lack credibility in the eyes of the world. In March, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said:

> The President has been very clear, and he is clear to us all the time. He would like to see it closed. We all would.

Well, then why is the Republican side preventing us from having a vote today or tomorrow or the next day that would say that Guantanamo should be closed within a year? How can the Secretary of Defense, the President of the United States, the Secretary of State make these comments that they want Guantanamo closed and the Republican side of the aisle prevent us from taking a vote in the Congress? I don't understand this.

Additional fallout from the Military Commissions Act is that it has stymied further trials under its auspices. Two military judges recently found that the detainees have been incorrectly classified as ''enemy combatants'' rather than as ''unlawful enemy combatants.'' So that is another hitch in this. They have classified people wrongly so they can't be tried.

Recently, a lieutenant colonel, who was part of this process from an intelligence point of view, in an affidavit has stated that even this classification was based on vague and incomplete intelligence. Lieutenant Colonel Abraham also said tribunal members were pressured by their superiors to rule against detainees, often without specific evidence, and that military prosecutors were given ''generic'' material that did not hold up in the face of the most basic legal challenges.

Now, let me be clear: I have no sympathy for Taliban fighters, al-Qaida terrorists, or anyone else out to hurt the United States, or commit cowardly and despicable acts of terror. There is nothing in this amendment that puts terrorists back on the street. That is not the goal. Any argument that this amendment would harm national security is flat out false.

I believe what harms national security is sacrificing our Nation's values—which have made us rightly the greatest democracy in the world—by setting up a hybrid system of justice, by not following the Uniform Code of Military Justice, but by creating this hybrid system, which has failed court tests now and will quite possibly fail another one shortly.

Now, how do you stop all this? As long as you have this extraterritorial facility out there, without the light of day shining on it, you can't. Today, two of our colleagues are visiting Guantanamo. Unfortunately, I couldn't go with them. The last time I visited Guantanamo was with Secretary Rumsfeld, rather early on, and I suspect what they will find is a rather well-run, strong, staunch military prison. But that doesn't mean the justice that is dispensed there is correct if it is secondary justice, if it is sublevel justice, if there is limited right of appeal, if you don't have access to an attorney easily, if you can't see evidence against you.

One can say, well, Guantanamo is no Abu Ghraib, and I would most likely agree with that—today. There have been allegations of inappropriate behavior in terms of interrogation techniques, no question about that. I assume that is corrected now. But it still looms out there as a way the United States has of not allowing these prisoners to face justice. It is one thing if you are a terrorist; it is another thing if you are in the wrong place at the wrong time, if you are swept up, if you are put in either a cage or a cell at Guantanamo, and if you stay there year after year after year with no recourse. That is a stain on American justice. We criticize the Chinese for their form of administrative detention, and yet here we practice a similar thing.

We face a serious, long-term terrorist threat. It may well go on for the next 10 or even 20 years. We must track down, punish, and prosecute those who seek to hurt this country and hurt our people. At the same time, we need national policies that are both tough and smart, and this isn't smart. We will fight terror with vigor and drive and purpose, but we must not forget who we are. We are a nation of laws. We are a nation of value and tradition. These values have been admired throughout the decades all over the world.

The world has looked at Guantanamo and made the judgment that it is wrong. I think it is time for the Senate to do something about it. The Senate has borne the burden of Guantanamo for too long. The time has come to close it down. I appeal to the other side to allow the debate on the floor and to give us a unanimous consent time agreement so that there might be a vote in this body.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

IRAQ

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise today reflecting on the most pressing issues on the minds of the American public—that of the current situation in Iraq. We have been in Iraq for nearly 4½ years, and frustration is certainly understandable. I wish nothing more than to see the United States reach a point where our soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines are able to leave and the Iraqi people can stand on their own. Our military has done an exceptional job. That point cannot be debated. But as so many have said, victory and ultimate success in Iraq cannot be completed solely through military strength.

I wish also to specifically point out the leadership of the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator JOHN MCCAIN, on this issue. Having just returned from Iraq, his pointed remarks on our united efforts in Iraq and the importance of our mission are much needed.

Senator MCCAIN understands, as I do, that the terrorist threat in Iraq will not stop, nor will our safety improve at home if our forces leave. In their own words, these dangerous ideologues continue to make bold and alarming threats worldwide, but even more importantly, they are backing up their words with action. They will continue to strike our allies in the gulf and they will continue to strike our friends in Europe, and I believe they will not hesitate to strike America again, as they did on September 11.

That said, I am extremely disappointed that more progress has not been made on the political and domestic security from within Iraq. The fact remains, Iraq is simply not ready to take over their own country today, and if the United States were to leave, the consequences would be nothing short of catastrophic. Al-Qaida is training, operating, and carrying out their missions in Iraq right now. As evidenced in Britain 2 weeks ago, they are clearly still a threat and are still determined to accomplish their goals of destroying western culture. That much has not changed.

On July 12 the President issued a report as required by the fiscal year 2007 Supplemental Appropriations bill assessing the progress of the sovereign government of Iraq's performance in achieving the benchmarks detailed in the bill. As we know, this report told us that 8 of the 18 benchmarks detailed in that bill received satisfactory marks. While we are certainly disappointed that more benchmarks were not achieved, it is important to highlight the success that is being made, and how the Iraqi government is performing, as their success will ultimately allow us to responsibly reduce our troop levels.

Specifically, the government of Iraq has made progress in forming a Constitutional Review Committee to review the constitution. This is important, just like in our Nation's history; we needed to create a constitution that provided a standard for which to base our laws. Though many contentious issues continue to exist, I am pleased that significant progress is being made. If Iraq cannot form their constitution, then it will be very difficult or impossible to move forward onto other matters.

Also, the Iraqis have satisfied the requirements set forth to enact and implement legislation forming semi-autonomous regions. This law is set to come into effect in 18 months, but thus far this potentially very contentious issue has not received much attention. This is important as it further organizes and equips Iraq to take on the responsibilities of a democratic government and this benchmark furthers the necessary groundwork needed to build a responsible and legitimate government.

Iraq has made progress to ensure the rights of minor political parties within the legislature and maintain that their rights are protected. Clearly this is important in obtaining legitimacy, particularly given the historical and present conflicts between the Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds.

On the security front, the Iraqis, with coalition support, have successfully reached benchmarks establishing joint security stations across Baghdad that provide a continuous security presence. These stations are necessary as they can effectively combine American technology and capabilities with the Iraqi presence on the ground in order to counter insurgent threats where they begin. By mid-June, 32 joint security stations have reached initial operational capability and 36 combat outposts have reached initial or full capacity.

Also, the goal of providing three trained and ready Iraqi brigades in support of Baghdad operations has been achieved and this complements the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group. Certainly this is a major priority as the development of a functional and effective Iraqi fighting and security force is absolutely essential for the Iraqis to further take the reins of their government, and I am pleased that these goals are being accomplished thus far.

At the beginning of this year, the President changed the focus of this effort. Decisions were made for a new direction. ADM William Fallon was placed in charge as CENTCOM commander and the Senate unanimously confirmed GEN David Petraeus as the new commander of our forces in Iraq. The much talked about, and much criticized, surge of 28,000 additional troops has only been underway for just about 3 weeks now.

Operation Phantom Thunder began on June 15 and already Iraq, and particularly Baghdad, is a much different place than it was only 6 months ago. U.S. forces have begun working closely with Iraqis to bring down sectarian violence of al-Qaida in country. So far the new counterinsurgency has decreased Shiite death squad activity and many militia leaders have been disposed of. Execution levels are at the lowest point in a year, and al-Qaida hotspots in the city are shrinking and becoming isolated from one another and supply lines are being cut around the city.

For the first time in years the U.S. is operating freely in eastern Baghdad as we are surrounding the villages and small towns around Baghdad routing out insurgent bases. Already, total car bombings and suicide attacks are down in May and June, and by the end of June, American troops controlled about 42 percent of the city's neighborhoods, up from 19 percent in April.

Initial military success certainly does not mean that operations are complete, nor is political victory guaranteed. The fact remains that this body unanimously confirmed GEN Petraeus with the knowledge that he planned to initiate this surge that would ideally route out al-Qaida and ultimately clear the path for internal change within Iraq. Again, the surge began on June 15 and we owe it to our troops who are placing their lives on the line not to pull the plug on them while they remain in harm's way.

Our best and brightest military minds have worked to construct this new strategy and we need to see it through. I would like to see our troops come home today, but the harsh reality remains that this is not a valid option, will not make us safer, and is not in our national interest. If we leave, it is naïve to think al-Qaida and our enemies will just go away and we will no longer be threatened.

Additionally, I have heard many of my colleagues discuss on the floor some of their new strategies in Iraq, strategies that I believe would weaken us at home and abroad. What I find curious is that they keep referring to finding a bipartisan resolution in Iraq, when only months ago this body overwhelmingly approved 2 new military commanders in the region and a new diplomatic leader in Ambassador Crocker. We also approved, in a bipartisan manner, the new way forward in Iraq that President Bush eloquently defended this morning. In that vote, this body committed that we would allow the surge to go forward and would give GEN Petraeus the time to enact the strategy. I cannot in good conscience cut short a plan barely 3 months old.

As we all know, in September a complete review of Iraq policy, including a detailed assessment of the surge will be presented. I look forward to that assessment. I look forward to making the appropriate decisions based on that report. It would be disingenuous to simply discontinue the plans that our military leaders have planned and are putting into place simply for political gains.

Remarkably, the Senate is in a similar situation that we were only months ago when many in this body wanted to reject the strategy GEN Petraeus proposed in Iraq, even before he has been given the full opportunity to perform his mission. Well, we are at it again. For what reason did my colleagues agree to the new strategy in Iraq but are not willing to support our own self-imposed guidelines? I don't know the answer to that, but I do know that I will not. I will continue to vote against any legislation that sets arbitrary deadlines and thresholds in Iraq—and plead with my colleagues to do the same.

Let's not stand here this week and prejudge what will come out of the September 15 report, but more importantly, let's not prejudge the talents of our men and women in Iraq. Let's give our military and diplomatic teams the time they deserve, and which we had promised them.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1585, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1585) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Nelson (NE) (for Levin) amendment No. 2011, in the nature of a substitute.

Levin amendment No. 2087 (to amendment No. 2011), to provide for a reduction and transition of United States forces in Iraq.

Reed amendment No. 2088 (to amendment No. 2087), to change the enactment date.

Cornyn amendment No. 2100 (to amendment No. 2011), to express the sense of the Senate that it is in the national security interest of the United States that Iraq not become a failed state and a safe haven for terrorists.

Mr. LEVIN. Parliamentary inquiry: What is the pending amendment?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The pending amendment is the Levin amendment No. 2087.

Mr. LEVIN. I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Oregon be recognized as in morning business for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LEVIN. I then ask unanimous consent that the Republican leader be recognized, and then following his statement, which we expect to be about 10 minutes, Senator DURBIN be recognized, and then the Senator from Colorado, Mr. SALAZAR, after Senator DURBIN; I further ask unanimous consent that if a Republican wishes to speak in between Senators DURBIN and SALAZAR, that Republican be recognized.

Mr. WARNER. Reserving the right to object.

Mr. LEVIN. I thought it was going to be a morning business UC, but we have protected a Republican speaking in between Senators DURBIN and SALAZAR.

Mr. WARNER. What is the order?

Mr. LEVIN. The order would be that Senator WYDEN would speak in morning business, then Senator MCCONNELL, and then Senator DURBIN, then if there is a Republican, and then to Senator SALAZAR.

Mr. WARNER. Would we have the benefit of an important discussion on your amendment?

Mr. LEVIN. Well, it is the pending amendment. Those who want to speak on the amendment would be free to do so. Hopefully, there will be many people speaking on it because we should have an opportunity before Wednesday.

Mr. WARNER. I wish to address it, but as a matter of courtesy—we have been at this for 29 years—I am going to wait until you speak, and then I will speak.

Mr. LEVIN. I have a number of things to say on the amendment, and the things I wish to say in depth I will maybe save until tomorrow. I would not want to speak without your being here.

Mr. WARNER. We have been here many years together. We manage, even though we oppose each other. But I do oppose you on this one, my dear friend.

Mr. LEVIN. I feel similarly about your amendment. I think both would enjoy being here when the other speaks. We can arrange that. We have been arranging this for 28 years. We will continue to arrange it.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank my distinguished colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WARNER. No objection.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President and colleagues, there are two truly critical issues for our country. You hear it every time you have a town meeting, every time a Senator is home. One of those issues is changing course in Iraq. The second issue is fixing health care in America.

The Senate is going to spend long hours on the floor of the Senate this week, hopefully, changing course in Iraq, making a fundamental shift of the policy, where the Senate would come together on a bipartisan basis. I wish to spend a bit of time this afternoon talking about the long hours that are ahead for members of the Senate Finance Committee in a critical part of the effort to fix American health care.

Over the last several months, four members, a bipartisan group in the Senate Finance Committee—Senators BAUCUS and GRASSLEY and ROCKEFELLER and HATCH—have toiled hard to better meet the health care needs of this country's youngsters.

It is a moral blot on our Nation that millions and millions of our kids go to bed at night without decent health care. This legislation is part of an effort to erase that moral blot—an unconscionable fact of American life that so many kids are scarred by the inability to get decent, good-quality, affordable health care.

In recent days, the Bush Administration has indicated they are considering vetoing this legislation. As one who has worked very extensively with the Bush Administration on health care issues, it is my hope they will join the effort, the bipartisan effort in the Senate, to try to work this legislation out and to do it in a bipartisan way. In fact, I think it is absolutely critical that it be done if there is to be another bipartisan effort in this Congress that would attack health care needs in this country on a broader basis.

Senator BENNETT and I, as the distinguished Presiding Officer, the Senator from Colorado, is aware, have brought to the Senate the first bipartisan health care overhaul bill in more than 13 years. It has brought together business organizations and labor organizations. It has put us in a position, for the first time in more than a decade, to look on a bipartisan basis at overhauling American health care. But to do it, we are first going to have to address the immediate needs of this country's kids. In fact, as part of the budget process, I was able to add legislation to indicate that those critical needs of this country's children would be added first.

Now, I would be the first to acknowledge there is a connection between the children's health care program and the broader health needs of our citizens. The fact is, most kids in America get health care through private coverage through their parents. Those who are on the CHIP program—the Children's Health Insurance Program—many of them get coverage through the private sector as well, through private policies.

But we are going to have to find common ground if we are to fix American health care. Democrats and Republicans on the Finance Committee have tried to do that on the CHIP legislation. As the Presiding Officer, the distinguished Senator from Colorado, knows, there are a great many Democrats who would like to spend more than this compromise effort would allow. We would like to look at allocating $50 billion for the needs of America's youngsters. The bipartisan compromise—as part of the cooperative effort of Senator BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY and Senator ROCKEFELLER and Senator HATCH—is talking about $35 billion. That is pretty hard for some on our side of the aisle to swallow.

Also, with respect to the extent of coverage, a number of Members on this side of the aisle had been concerned about other groups of citizens who have not been able to get good-quality, affordable coverage, and they have been able to get benefits under existing services offered by the children's health program because the Bush administration allowed for special waivers. So what the compromise is seeking to do is to say: All right, if it has been allowed under a waiver program, let's not point the finger at anybody. Let's say those waivers, in effect, would be grandfathered. They would be protected. But then we will move on, and we would move on in a bipartisan kind of way.

I will tell my colleague, the Presiding Officer—because he and I have spoken about health care often—we know what needs to be done in American health care. We are spending enough money, certainly. This year, we will spend $2.3 trillion. There are 300 million of us. If you divide 300 million into $2.3 trillion, you could go out and hire a doctor for every seven families in the United States. We are spending enough money on health care; we are just not spending it in the right places.

We also know—because Senator BENNETT and I have talked to a great many on both sides of the aisle—there is a real prospect for an ideological truce here on the health care issue in the Senate.

A great many Republicans, to their credit, are acknowledging now, for the first time, that to fix American health care you have to cover everybody because if you do not cover everybody, those who are uninsured shift their bills to the insured. A great many Democrats, also to their credit, have been willing to acknowledge that just turning all this over to Government—having a Government-run health care

program—is not going to work politically either, that it is going to be essential to have a private sector in American health care that works. It would be a reformed one. Private insurance companies could not cherry-pick any longer, they could not take just healthy people and send sick people over to Government programs more fragile than they are, but that there would be a real private sector.

So in addition to spending enough money and in addition to something of an ideological truce now on health care between Democrats and Republicans, for the first time—I particularly want to credit my colleague from Utah, Senator BENNETT, for working closely with me on this part of the effort—I think we can show people who have coverage why it is in their interest to be for reform. Certainly, here in the Senate we know that past efforts—particularly in 1993, during the debate about the Clinton plan, the single biggest barrier was convincing people who had coverage why it would be in their interest to support reform.

What we have been able to do, on a bipartisan basis—Senator BENNETT and I working together is to come up with an approach that will show people who have coverage—workers and employers—why it will work for them with the very first paychecks that are issued under our legislation, the Healthy Americans Act. Not in 5 years, not in 8 years, not sometime down the road, but it will work for those who have coverage—workers and employers—with the very first paychecks that are issued when this legislation becomes law. The reason it would benefit those workers and employers is they would have more cash in their pocket. The workers would have more choices for the health care that was available to them. They would certainly have more security—health care that could never ever be taken away.

My hope is that we can have a cooperative, bipartisan effort on the CHIP legislation, starting tomorrow night. As my friend from Colorado, the Presiding Officer, knows, we will have a late markup. Democrats and Republicans on the committee want to work together. We want to work with the Administration. I hope the Administration will join us in that effort.

I would also suggest that if that happens, we can go on to the broader health care issue, where there are a number of areas where the Administration seeks reform. I want to assure them I am interested in working with them. For example, the President has made the point—it is one that I share—that the Federal Tax Code as it relates to health care disproportionally favors the most wealthy and rewards inefficiency. Today, in America, if you are a high-flying CEO and you want to go out and get a designer smile plastered on your face, you can do it and write off the cost of that operation on your taxes—every dime. But if you are a hard-working woman in a furniture store in Colorado or Illinois or Oregon and your company has no plan, you get nothing out of the Tax Code. You get nothing.

So what Senator BENNETT and I seek to do is redirect those several hundred billion dollars in tax expenditures for health care to people in the middle-income brackets, the lower middle-income brackets. The Bush Administration has a different approach with respect to the Tax Code and health, but as I have said to the President personally, I think he is still onto the basic concept. This is an area where Democrats and Republicans can find common ground.

But if we are going to get, in this session, to the broader issue of health care reform—of course, a lot of people think it cannot be done; they think it will be 2009 and we will have another Presidential election before there is real reform—if we are going to deal with it in this session—and Senator BENNETT and I are pulling out all the stops to try to get broader health care reform out there this session in order to get to that broader debate—Democrats and Republicans have to come together on this crucial issue of meeting the health care needs of this country, of wiping out this moral blot on our Nation that millions of kids do not have decent health care.

That effort will start tomorrow night. This is a key time for those of us who want to reform American health care. If we can come together in this Senate—starting tomorrow night under Senators BAUCUS and GRASSLEY and HATCH and ROCKEFELLER—my hope is we can keep that coalition together and then segue over to the broader reform where Senator BENNETT and I have brought, for the first time in more than 13 years, colleagues, a bipartisan proposal to overall American health care. It has the support of business and labor. Consumer groups have been involved in the development of it.

I am very hopeful that under the leadership of Senator REID—and I see the distinguished leader from Illinois in the Chamber—we can change course with respect to the war in Iraq but we can also change course with respect to the most pressing domestic issue of our time; that is, fixing American health care. The effort starts tomorrow night.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, would I be correct in saying this time is reserved for the distinguished Republican leader?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I do not see him present at the moment; therefore, if some other speaker, for a period of time, wishes to go forward—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I believe the Republican leader will be here in approximately 5 minutes. I will, if the Senator from Virginia concurs, suggest the absence of a quorum and wait.

Mr. WARNER. Fine. I just wanted to accommodate any Senator who needed 5 minutes. I see none.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I know the majority leader has indicated he is going to file cloture on the Levin amendment and is setting up a cloture vote for Wednesday. It had been my hope we could have by consent set up a process by which we could put the Levin amendment in the queue with a 60-vote threshold such as we have had on virtually every Iraq amendment this week, and also a 60-vote threshold on the Cornyn amendment, which is a logical counter to the Levin amendment. As I indicated, it is my understanding the majority leader announced earlier it would be his intention to file cloture on the Levin-Reed amendment this evening. That would, as I suggested, allow for a cloture vote to occur on Wednesday of this week. As I indicated, it had been my hope we could have had the Levin amendment and the Cornyn amendment in juxtaposition by consent, both requiring 60 votes. This has been the way we have dealt with essentially every controversial Iraq amendment this year, no matter what bill it has been offered on.

AMENDMENT NO. 2241 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2211

Given the majority leader's intention to file cloture this evening on the Levin amendment, I now send an amendment to the desk and ask for its consideration.

Mr. REED. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Presiding Officer will hold on for a second to ask a question of the Parliamentarian.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Kentucky [Mr. MCCONNELL] proposes an amendment 2241 to amendment No. 2211.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the termination of the reading of the amendment?

Mr. DURBIN. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

At the end of the bill add the following:

SEC. 1535. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF A FAILED STATE IN IRAQ.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) A failed state in Iraq would become a safe haven for Islamic radicals, including al Qaeda and Hezbollah, who are determined to attack the United States and United States allies.

(2) The Iraq Study Group report found that ''[a] chaotic Iraq could provide a still stronger base of operations for terrorists who seek to act regionally or even globally''.

(3) The Iraq Study Group noted that ''Al Qaeda will portray any failure by the United States in Iraq as a significant victory that will be featured prominently as they recruit for their cause in the region and around the world''.

(4) A National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the consequences of a premature withdrawal from Iraq would be that—

(A) Al Qaeda would attempt to use Anbar province to plan further attacks outside of Iraq;

(B) neighboring countries would consider actively intervening in Iraq; and

(C) sectarian violence would significantly increase in Iraq, accompanied by massive civilian casualties and displacement.

(5) The Iraq Study Group found that ''a premature American departure from Iraq would almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence and further deterioration of conditions. . . . The near-term results would be a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy. Al Qaeda would depict our withdrawal as a historic victory.''

(6) A failed state in Iraq could lead to broader regional conflict, possibly involving Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

(7) The Iraq Study group noted that ''Turkey could send troops into northern Iraq to prevent Kurdistan from declaring independence''.

(8) The Iraq Study Group noted that ''Iran could send troops to restore stability in southern Iraq and perhaps gain control of oil fields. The regional influence of Iran could rise at a time when that country is on a path to producing nuclear weapons.''

(9) A failed state in Iraq would lead to massive humanitarian suffering, including widespread ethnic cleansing and countless refugees and internally displaced persons, many of whom will be tortured and killed for having assisted Coalition forces.

(10) A recent editorial in the New York Times stated, ''Americans must be clear that Iraq, and the region around it, could be even bloodier and more chaotic after Americans leave. There could be reprisals against those who worked with American forces, further ethnic cleansing, even genocide. Potentially destabilizing refugee flows could hit Jordan and Syria. Iran and Turkey could be tempted to make power grabs.''

(11) The Iraq Study Group found that ''[i]f we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-range consequences could eventually require the United States to return''.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate should commit itself to a strategy that will not leave a failed state in Iraq; and

(2) the Senate should not pass legislation that will undermine our military's ability to prevent a failed state in Iraq.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the Levin-Reed, et al., amendment No. 2087, to H.R. 1585, Department of Defense Authorization, 2008.

Carl Levin, Ted Kennedy, Byron L. Dorgan, Russell D. Feingold, B.A. Mikulski, Debbie Stabenow, Benjamin L. Cardin, Amy Klobuchar, Pat Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Jeff Bingaman, Jack Reed, Ron Wyden, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Robert Menendez, Daniel K. Akaka, Charles Schumer.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on pending amendment No. 2241 to Calendar No. 189, H.R. 1585, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008.

Mitch McConnell, Wayne Allard, Pete V. Domenici, Jim Bunning, Jeff Sessions, Chuck Grassley, C.S. Bond, Mike Crapo, Jon Kyl, Elizabeth Dole, Trent Lott, John Barrasso, James Inhofe, Lindsey Graham, Lisa Murkowski, John McCain.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, it is a shame we find ourselves in the position we are in. The sensible and logical way to set up this debate with the Levin amendment and the Cornyn amendment would have been to do it by consent with two 60-vote thresholds. This continued effort to thwart the ability of the minority to get amendments in the queue and to get them offered and voted on is not, I might say, a very effective way to legislate, because it produces a level of animosity and unity on the minority side that makes it more difficult for the majority to pass important legislation.

In addition to the Cornyn amendment, we have the Warner-Lugar proposal, which certainly deserves a vote, as does the Salazar—the occupant of the Chair—the Salazar-Alexander amendment.

I hope we could do this in an orderly way. We have been on this bill now for a week and a half. We are clearly going to be on it through the end of this week. It would be important, as we move toward disposition of this measure, to have all Senators who have important amendments have an opportunity to be heard.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized.

Mr. REED. I had the opportunity this morning to listen to the majority leader, HARRY REID, as I presided. He made it clear that he would be perfectly willing to allow a 50-vote majority vote on both the Levin-Reed amendment and the Cornyn amendment or the proposed McConnell amendment. I think if there is any attempt to obstruct the will of the Senate, it is by those who are suggesting that we must have a 60-vote threshold. I think Senator REID made it clear that he would be happy to entertain a limited debate and a majority vote on the Levin-Reed amendment, the Kyl amendment, or other amendments that may be appropriate on the policy in Iraq.

I also understand at this moment, under the pending unanimous consent, the Senator from Illinois is to be recognized.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his hard work with the Senator from Michigan in preparing this bill on Defense authorization.

With all due respect to the minority leader, the statement he made on the floor earlier is not accurate. The Republican minority leader said, on issues relating to Iraq, we have required 60 votes. I remind the Republican minority leader that the vote on the timetable on the supplemental appropriations bill was a simple majority vote. It was not a 60-vote threshold. The most important Iraq vote of the year did not require 60 votes on the floor of the Senate. It passed the Senate with a bipartisan rollcall, with 51 or 52 Members supporting it, and it was sent to President Bush for one of his only three vetoes since he was elected President. I am sure the minority leader from Kentucky remembers that it was not a 60-vote requirement.

Now, let's look at the Defense authorization bill here—at the history of the Defense authorization bill. Once again, I ask the minority leader from Kentucky to please look at the record. What he said earlier on the floor is not accurate.

In the last debate on the Defense authorization bill, there were two Iraq amendments offered. One was by Senators LEVIN and REED and another by Senator KERRY. Both related to the war in Iraq, and both required only a majority vote.

The Senator from Kentucky has not accurately portrayed what occurred on the floor of the Senate either with our supplemental appropriations bill or the previous Defense authorization bill. Now, for those who are following this debate and wondering: Why are you worried about how many votes are required, this is what the Senate is all about. The question is, Will this Senate speak on the issue of the policy on the war in Iraq?

The Senator from Kentucky understands—because he has been a veteran of this body—that he does not have a majority of the Senators supporting his position or the position of President Bush. So he started this debate by saying we won't allow a majority vote.

It will take 60 votes—60 percent of the Senate—to change the policy on the war in Iraq. The Senator from Kentucky is betting that he can hold enough Republican Senators back from voting for a change in policy on the war in Iraq to defeat our efforts to start bringing our soldiers home. That is his procedural approach. He has stood by it. But he should confess it for what it is. It is a departure from where we have been on the debate on Iraq, on the supplemental appropriations bill, and on the Defense authorization bill.

Mr. President, it is unfortunate, and it is wrong. It is wrong to require 60 percent of this body to vote this way if, traditionally, on the war in Iraq we have required only a simple majority. I suppose it is encouraging to us that more than 60 percent of the American people get it. They understand how failed this policy has been of the Bush administration—the policy being supported by the minority leader of the Senate. They understand that. They want us to do something about it. But the Senator from Kentucky has thrown this obstacle in our path. He created this procedural roadblock. He has filibustered—starting a filibuster to stop the debate on the war in Iraq.

I have been here for a few years, and I have not seen a full-throated, fully implemented filibuster that you might have recalled from ''Mr. Smith Goes to Washington,'' when Jimmy Stewart stood at his desk, until he crumpled in exhaustion, filibustering a bill to stop it. Over the years, our gentility has led us to a different kind of filibuster. It is a filibuster in name only, where one side says we are going to keep this debate going on indefinitely, and the other side says we are going to bring it to a close with a motion for cloture, and we will see you in 30 hours; have a nice time we will see you tomorrow morning.

We are going to change that procedure this week. Since the Republican side has decided they want to filibuster our effort to debate the war policy on Iraq, we have decided on the Democratic side that we are going to have a real filibuster. One of the critics of this recently called it a stunt that we would stay in session—a stunt that we would have a sleepless night for Senators, a stunt that we would inconvenience Senators and staff, the press, and those who follow the proceedings. I don't think it is a stunt. I think it reflects the reality of this war.

How many sleepless nights have our soldiers and their families spent waiting to find out whether they will come home alive? How many sleepless nights have they spent praying that after the second and third redeployment their soldier will still have the courage and strength to beat back the enemy and come home to their family? It is about time for the Senate to spend at least one sleepless night. Maybe it is only a symbol, but it is an important symbol for the soldiers and their families. It really goes to the nature of sacrifice.

I guess I was raised as a little boy reading about World War II and remembering the Korean war when my two brothers served. There was a sense of national commitment in those wars. People back home, as well as those on the front, believed they were in it together. Sacrifices had to be made, your daily living habits, the kinds of things you could buy, and ration cards and buying U.S. savings bonds. America was one united Nation in those wars. We accepted that shared sacrifice, and we were better for it. But during this war, sad to say, this President has not summoned that same spirit of sacrifice. He basically told us that this war can be waged without inconveniencing the lives of most Americans.

Our soldiers go through more than inconvenience. They go through hardship and deprivation. Many face injury and death in serving our country. But for most of us, life goes on as normal. This President hasn't asked great sacrifice from the American people.

When I visited Iraq, it was not uncommon to have a marine or soldier say to me over lunch: Does anybody know what is going on over here? Does anybody know what we are up against? It is a legitimate question. We focus on these superficial stories in the press that don't mean a thing and forget the obvious.

The obvious is this: Every month we are losing American lives; about 100 American soldiers die each month in this war in Iraq, and 1,000 are seriously injured. We spend $12 billion each month. That is the reality.

I know there is frustration by the soldiers and their families that we are not paying close enough attention. But the American people understand that this failed policy from the Bush administration has to come to an end. Wasn't it interesting over the weekend when the Prime Minister of Iraq invited us to leave, and said: You can take off anytime you would like, America. We will take care of our own problems. Prime Minister al-Maliki, the man we helped to bring to office, whom we hoped would show the leadership in Iraq for its future, asked America to pick up and go whenever we would like to.

What do the Iraqi people think about our presence? Well, 69 percent of them say our presence in Iraq today, with our troops, makes it more dangerous to live there. More than 2 million of those soldiers, of those Iraqis, have left that country as refugees. Millions have been displaced from their homes. Thousands—we don't even know the number—have been injured and killed. They want us to leave—this occupation Army of Americans.

What do the American people think about this occupation in Iraq? They want it to end as well. They don't see any end in sight. They don't hear from this President the kinds of strategy or direction that leads them to believe that this will end well or end soon. They want our troops to start coming home. I agree with them. I don't believe the Iraqis will accept responsibility for their own country until we start leaving. If the Iraqis know that every time there is a problem, they can dial 9–1–1 and bring on 20,000 of our best and bravest soldiers to quell the violence on their streets, what kind of incentive is that for them to protect their own country and make the critical political decisions which may lead one day to stability?

I look at this Cornyn amendment just filed. I respect my colleague from Texas, but I tell you, he is asking for too much. He is asking the United States to stay in Iraq to make certain that it succeeds. How long is that going to be? How long will that go on?

There are three battles going on in Iraq today: First, who is in charge? The Sunnis, Shia, Sadr militia, al-Qaida, or some other force? The Kurds also have to be part of the equation. That battle goes on every day on the floor of the Parliament in Iraq as they try to decide who is going to try to govern their country.

There is a second battle going on as well. It is a battle as to whether Iraq is going to be a nation. The Cornyn amendment assumes, and many people assume, that Iraq has been a nation forever. It has not. Certainly, in the depths of history, you can find Mesopotamia. We all read about it in the earliest civilizations, and about the Tigris and Euphrates. But Iraq, as we know it today, was the creation of British diplomats after World War I who sat down with a map and said the French can take Lebanon, bring in the Shia and Sunni—on and on, creating countries out of whole cloth at the end of a war, dividing up the soils of the Middle East. That was the creation of Iraq as we know it. It has not been in existence that long—not one century.

Iraq has to decide whether there is more that binds them than divides them. They have to decide whether the Kurds, Sunni, and Shia of this location want to come together as a nation to share in governance, in revenue, and to share in their future. That is an ongoing debate in Iraq today.

There is a third debate in Iraq today that is even deeper in history. It is a debate between warring Islamic factions that has been going on for 14 centuries. Ever since the death of the great prophet Mohammed, Islamic people have argued over his rightful heirs—one branch of the Sunni religion of Muslims or one in the Shia—and they came to different conclusions. They have not resolved that. Often, that difference of opinion has erupted into violence, which we see today on the streets of Iraq.

So Senator CORNYN files an amendment that says the United States should stay there with its forces until they resolve these three problems: Who is going to govern, whether there will be a nation, and this Islamic division. Is that what we bargained for when the President asked us to invade Iraq? It

certainly is not. Not one of those things was included in the President's request for the authorization of force in Iraq.

Do you remember why President Bush told us we had to invade Iraq? Saddam Hussein—a tyrant killing his own people—was a threat to the region and to his own country. Saddam Hussein is gone, dug out of a hole in the ground, put on trial by his own people, and executed.

The second reason the President said we had to invade Iraq was to find and destroy weapons of mass destruction. Well, we have been looking for 4½ years, Mr. President, for weapons of mass destruction, and we cannot find one. So that reason for the invasion of American forces is long gone. And the final, of course, was to protect any threat of Iraq to America's security. I can tell you that after Saddam Hussein was deposed and dispatched quickly by our fine military, and when weapons of mass destruction were not found, Iraq was no threat to the United States.

Now comes the new Republican rationale, the Cornyn-McConnell rationale: We need to stay in Iraq until they resolve century-old battles over the Islamic religion. We need to stay in Iraq until they decide whether they want to come together as a nation. We need to stay in Iraq until the Parliament decides to roll up its sleeves and make important political decisions about their future. Just how long will that be? How many American soldiers will be called into action for those goals? How many times will Congress be called on to vote for authorization of force to reach these objectives?

They have told us what it is all about. From the point of view of the Bush administration and their supporters on the Republican side of the aisle, there is no end in sight in our occupation of Iraq. They would have us stay there for a long time. The American people know better. They understand the sacrifices we have made.

The President likes to define this in terms of victory and defeat, saying if we start bringing American troops home, somehow, in his mind, that is a defeat. I say to the President, there are several things he should consider. We were not defeated when we deposed Saddam Hussein. We were successful. We were not defeated when we scoured that country and found no weapons of mass destruction. We were successful. We were not defeated when we gave the Iraqi people a chance for the first free election in their history. We were successful. We were not defeated when they were allowed to form their own Government to plan for their own future. We were successful. We certainly have not been defeated day to day with the courage of our men and women in uniform.

I hear an argument from time to time as well: If our troops start coming home now and things go badly in Iraq, those who have served and sacrificed and even those who have died will have done so in vain. I couldn't disagree more. History has taught us a very basic lesson. The test of courage of a soldier is not to be measured by the wisdom of Presidents and generals to send them into battle. Presidents and generals make serious mistakes. They send troops into battle where they have no chance to win. But those soldiers do their duty. They show heroism, courage, and valor, and no one—no one—can take that away from them.

This political debate about the wisdom of the President's foreign policy has reached a point where we have a number of amendments on the floor. The Republican leadership has established hurdles and blockades—everything they can find—to stop us from a vote that reflects the feelings of the American people. Mr. President, you know why? They are afraid of what the American people want. They are afraid the American people may prevail. So they have dreamed up this procedural requirement of 60 votes, a requirement that did not take place on the Iraq amendments on previous Defense authorization bills, a requirement that did not take place when it came to our supplemental.

We have offered them: Let's have a majority vote. Let's speak as a Senate to this issue seriously, an up-or-down vote on our amendment, an up-or-down vote on their amendment. They rejected it. Sixty votes—they have it wired. They have it figured out. There is one thing they don't have figured out and that is how they are going to go home and explain this situation, how will these Senators go back to their States after they have told their people they are giving up on the President's policy in Iraq and explain why they didn't support the only amendment that will seriously change our policy in Iraq?

I don't think they can. They can talk about supporting other amendments. There is only one amendment by the Senator from Rhode Island, Mr. REED, and the Senator from Michigan, Mr. LEVIN, that puts a timetable to bring this war to a close that doesn't ask the President to consider our point of view but says we will use our congressional powers to require of the President a change in policy. Only one vote. Every other vote these Senators may cast, they are going to say: Oh, I told you I disagreed with the President and that is why I voted this way.

Let me tell you, they don't stand the test of scrutiny. Look carefully at those amendments. See if they require of the President a change in policy. See if they bring one American soldier safely home. If they don't, then they don't achieve the goals the American people expect of us.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, at some point, I would be privileged if I could enter into a colloquy with my valued friend. So at the proper juncture in his remarks, perhaps we could have a bit of a colloquy.

Mr. DURBIN. Out of great respect for the Senator from Virginia, I would like to give him that answer now.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my friend. We can have our debates, and we frequently do, on procedure, and it is very confusing, of course, to the American public. But these are old rules that go back, I might say with some sense of pride, to Thomas Jefferson. He had a hand in writing them. Somehow this magnificent institution, the Senate, has been able to serve our great Republic these 200-some-odd years.

Apart from procedure—and it seems to me I recall that at an earlier juncture in the spring when we were debating certain amendments on Iraq, the Senator from Virginia had an amendment. It got over 50 votes. It was a bipartisan amendment. That amendment, quite interesting, while it failed to reach the 60-vote margin, it was picked up by the appropriators and word for word written into the appropriations bill.

It required, among other things, that the President report on July 15. That report, I think, was of value. People can differ with it. I know it attracted a lot of attention and widespread press coverage. It was of value.

That report also set up an independent group. I consulted with my good friend, the chairman, Senator LEVIN, and told him I felt all the years we have been working together we get a lot of facts from the Pentagon about the status of Iraq's security forces. Shouldn't we have an independent group not affiliated with the Department of Defense—I am not, in any way, impugning the accuracy of their facts—have an independent group give us a second opinion.

GEN Jim Jones, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, offered to head up that group. I talked with him about it. He thought about it a long time. He decided to do it. He has about 18 individuals with military experience and two former police chiefs. They got back this weekend from a very intensive 1-week schedule studying these situations. So there is a great convergence of information that will be brought to bear and made public the first week in September.

But back to this question before us. The distinguished Republican leader put an amendment up. I would like to ask my distinguished colleague if he would cover with me the provisions and what his views are on some of the findings in the amendment.

This is a sense of the Senate on the consequences of a failed state in Iraq. Much of this material was put before the Senate a few days ago, filed by our distinguished colleague from Texas, Mr. CORNYN. Would the Senator from Illinois engage me in asking a few questions about it or is there another time he would be willing to do it?

Mr. DURBIN. No, if I may say to my colleague from Virginia, I will consider this colloquy to be in the form of a question without yielding the floor.

Mr. WARNER. Yes, of course, Mr. President.

Mr. DURBIN. Please proceed.

Mr. WARNER. For instance, the first finding:

A failed state in Iraq would become a safe haven for Islamic radicals, including al Qaeda and Hezbollah, who are determined to attack the United States and United States allies.

We know from experience in Afghanistan that bin Laden occupied a piece of territory there and set up his training camp. Much of the training that led to the horrific damage to our Nation, loss of life and property, occurred there—of course, September 11. Does the Senator not agree—I am curious, I would like to get some understanding of what the Senator's thoughts are on this sense of the Senate.

Mr. DURBIN. First, I wish to express my thinking and feelings about the Senator from Virginia, whom I respect very much, who served our country so well in so many capacities. He is the longest serving Senator from the State of Virginia in the history of the United States of America.

Mr. WARNER. One other, Mr. President, was a bit longer. I am No. 2, kind of like the Senator from Illinois, No. 2.

Mr. DURBIN. Second longest in the history of the State of Virginia and who has been a constructive partner in our efforts to deal with this issue of Iraq. Even before other Senators on his side of the aisle questioned, spoke out, he was there, and I respect him very much for that effort.

Mr. President, I say to the Senator from Virginia that the Levin-Reed amendment is conscious of the very first point he made, saying that even redeploying troops, we would reserve the right to use our soldiers, use our troops to stop the expansion of al-Qaida. So we are not walking away from that threat.

Al-Qaida, as the Senator from Virginia knows, were the real culprits on 9/11. They are the ones who are sworn enemies of the United States and in what we believe. I don't believe any Senator on my side, in the Levin-Reed amendment or otherwise, has suggested we would not continue to work to stop the advance of al-Qaida and its evil scheme.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I think the Senator is accurate. I have studied the Levin amendment. I am opposed to it because of the fixed timetables. But let's proceed to the second one. I think we have covered the first, and I find it very helpful.

The second finding:

The Iraq Study Group report found that ''[a] chaotic Iraq could provide a still stronger base of operations for terrorists who seek to act regionally or even globally.''

To me that seems to have some basis in fact. Does the Senator agree with that?

Mr. DURBIN. I say to the Senator from Virginia in response, at some point, the Iraqis have to take control of their country, their territory, and their future. It is certainly not in their best interest, if they want to develop, for example, an oil industry that is going to fuel their economy and improve the lives of the people, to allow terrorist groups to run without restraint.

So, yes, I think that is a concern they should have as a nation, and that is why the second part of the Levin-Reed amendment is so important. We reserve the right for American forces to help train and equip the Iraqi soldiers, Army, and police.

Fighting terrorism, we now see most often is a military function, but I think historically it has been a police function. Regardless of which, we reserve in the Levin-Reed amendment the right for America to continue to invest in the Iraqi Army and police force, for that very reason, so there is internal stability in Iraq, even as our combat forces are removed.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I appreciate that answer. I think there is a provision—as a matter of fact, the amendment Senator LUGAR and I filed has very much the same language in it. Let's proceed to No. 3.

The Iraq Study Group noted that ''Al Qaeda will portray any failure by the United States in Iraq as a significant victory that will be featured prominently as they recruit for their cause in the region and around the world.''

That concerns me. I think there is some truth to that statement.

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Virginia served on the Intelligence Committee, as I did for 4 years. I think he served longer. He will recall we were told by our intelligence agencies that our invasion of Iraq has led to an emergence of al-Qaida terrorism in that country. Sadly, these terrorists are taking their training by trying to kill American soldiers and those who support us.

So my feeling is that the current strategy we have been using, unfortunately, is fueling this growth in terrorism, growth in al-Qaida, the presence of all these combat troops.

I sincerely believe we have to understand that fighting al-Qaida, fighting terrorism is still a high priority. This administration was diverted from our first priority.

The Senator from Virginia may remember that after 9/11, within days, the President came to the Senate and asked us to declare war on al-Qaida and those responsible for 9/11. The vote was unanimous. Every Senator voted in favor of that request, both political parties. Those were sworn enemies of the United States who had killed 3,000 innocent people. But we lost sight of that goal. Instead of focusing on Afghanistan, the Taliban, and al-Qaida, we were diverted into Iraq.

I say to the Senator from Virginia, as we start bringing combat soldiers out of Iraq, I don't believe we should walk away from our responsibility in Afghanistan, fighting the Taliban, working on the border with Pakistan to try to make sure the growth of al-Qaida is stopped.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I say to the Senator most respectfully, I know no one over here who wants to try to do a precipitous withdrawal or lessen our efforts against al-Qaida. As a matter of fact, we want to reinforce our efforts against al-Qaida. We can go back and argue the numerical presence of al-Qaida at the time we went in. I do recall that very vividly and conducted many hearings in the Armed Services Committee. Al-Qaida was not high on the scope. There was mention of it. We have to deal with the facts that exist now, and it is clear, for whatever reason, they are now in that area in significant numbers larger than when we went in. I, personally, feel it is not as a consequence of our military action thus far. They simply see the terrific divisions between the Sunni culture and the culture of the Shia, and they are trying to foment among those two venerable religious cultures as much fighting as they possibly can. I think we both have to agree, to that extent, they have been successful.

Clearly, al-Qaida has as its main goal, at such time as possible, to bring about further harm to the United States of America. There is no doubt in my mind, and I am sure there is no doubt in the mind of the Senator from Illinois. So I think anything that is portrayed as a failure of our commitment in Iraq could be utilized, as I said, for recruitment of their troops, whether in Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere in the world.

Mr. DURBIN. May I say to the Senator from Virginia in response that I believe—and I think the Levin-Reed amendment addresses this in section 3—we also should be thinking beyond the parameters of our current discussion about military prisons and about other nations in the region. I am sure the Senator from Virginia is going to bring that up, too, as part of it.

It strikes me at this point in time that other nations in the region interested in stability in their own countries and stability overall have not accepted or shouldered the responsibility they should. Whether it is the Arab League or some other group, they need to step forward and say that the territorial integrity of Iraq, the stability of Iraq is in the best interests of the region. I don't think they are going to do that as long as the U.S. presence is so overwhelming, as long as we are the issue. If the issue is Iraq and its future, I think it is more likely these countries will step forward, and this Levin-Reed amendment makes that point.

What we are talking about is a comprehensive strategy to deal with the future of Iraq.

Mr. WARNER. But I say, in response to my distinguished colleague, it is for that very reason the President is dispatching the Secretaries of State and Defense into that region, to bring that point very clearly, this problem which is being experienced in Iraq. And when

I say ''experienced,'' I mean devastating loss of life of Iraqi citizens, considerable loss of life of our own forces, and loss of limb. That is something which every Senator on both sides of the aisle is concerned with daily. But thus far, the bordering nations certainly have not stepped up, in my estimation, to take a constructive role. If anything, we have, in Syria and Iran, pretty convincing evidence that they are taking steps antithetical to bringing about a resolution of some sort of peace and stability in Iraq.

Mr. DURBIN. I might say, in response to the Senator from Virginia, that I don't recall the exact vote, but when Senator LIEBERMAN offered an amendment to this bill last week relating to Iran, the vote was overwhelmingly bipartisan. We agree with that. How do you contain Iran? How do you stop Iraq from becoming an Iranian client state?

There is so much we can do, but the region has to respond. The Senator from Virginia knows as well as I do that there is division within the Islamic religion and that the Sunni faction or element is the most dominant in that region and around the world.

Mr. WARNER. By far. I think it has been 90 percent——

Mr. DURBIN. An overwhelming percentage.

Mr. WARNER.—are associated with the Sunni perspective versus about 10 or less percent the Shia.

Mr. DURBIN. So it does not seem to be in the best interest of other Islamic states to see the development of a Shia force that combines Iraq and Iran. So my feeling is, again either through the United Nations, through NATO, through other groups, but trying to make this a much more inclusive effort, that we have a much better chance.

The problem is clear: As long as it is the United States dominating the agenda in Iraq, it is an obstacle for other countries to get involved. I salute the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State for their efforts, but I think we have complicated the situation dramatically with the length of this war and the visibility of the United States as the lead force in this invasion.

Mr. WARNER. We have to decide on the facts as they exist now, and I think our Government has. But even in the recent words of the President, he wants to intensify the participation of other nations in this situation.

My colleague, Senator LUGAR, in preparing our amendment—and he is quite expert in this area—has a considerable portion of our amendment—again, a sense of the Senate—directed at steps our country could be taking to augment those steps already taken. He recently met with the Secretary of State. They had a discussion here a few days ago, prior to our entering the amendment on this very matter. So we are moving forward.

I think my colleague and I have no difference on the need to involve the border states and other Muslim countries of responsibility.

Mr. DURBIN. I say to the Senator from Virginia, he used some words which I think tell part of the story here when he said his amendment with Senator LUGAR is a sense-of-the-Senate amendment. He is a veteran lawmaker and knows a sense-of-the-Senate resolution does not have the power of law. It is to suggest policy changes to the administration. The difference with Levin-Reed, if I am not mistaken, is we are dealing with legislative language. We are actually changing the law of the land when it comes to our forces in Iraq. That is significantly different. This is self-enforcing, the Levin-Reed amendment. Sense-of-the-Senate resolutions, either by Senator LUGAR or Senator CORNYN notwithstanding, will not change the policy. They do not have the binding impact of law as the Levin-Reed amendment does.

Mr. WARNER. We have to always monitor ourselves with the Constitution of the United States, and it explicitly gives to the President the power as Commander in Chief to direct our forces and to employ such strategy as he deems necessary to defend the security interests of our country. That is my concern with my distinguished colleague, Senator LEVIN, and he and I have worked here in this Chamber now in our 29th year, for those following this debate. My concern is that Congress become involved in military strategy and writing into law precisely what is done. I think that is crossing a constitutional issue.

I would like to continue with my colleague.

Mr. DURBIN. I might just say that I am glad my colleague from West Virginia is not on the floor because I don't have my Constitution in my pocket. But certainly article I, section 8—thank you, Senator, for covering for me here—says—if the Senator from Virginia will bear with me for just one moment.

Mr. WARNER. I know the provision quite well. It is on the regulation.

Mr. DURBIN. To raise and support armies, provide and maintain a navy, provide for militia, to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed—there may be another section here I am overlooking.

Mr. WARNER. I think you have about got it, if I may say.

Mr. DURBIN. Within the powers of Congress, we are not silent when it comes to the conduct of our military in this country.

Mr. WARNER. No, we are on a coequal basis, as the Senator well knows.

Mr. DURBIN. To make rules for the Government and regulation of the land and naval forces. Article I, section 8 of the Constitution.

Mr. WARNER. Well, I remember on this floor and my distinguished colleague from Michigan remembers when Senator BYRD argued very persuasively about certain aspects of the famous War Powers Act. Now, if we bring all of that history into this debate, and it may well be that we should do that, the reason that subject was carefully considered by the Senate, passed, and became law many years ago—each President has acknowledged that in spirit they are complying with the directions of the Congress, but they do not want it put into law.

Mr. DURBIN. May I ask the Senator from Virginia, and I know this is not following the exact process of our Senate rules, but I would ask him if he would address a point I made earlier; that the authorization for the use of force which President George W. Bush brought before us in October 2002 was explicit in the reasons for our invasion of Iraq—the threat of Saddam Hussein, the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and any threat of that nation to the security of the United States. Does the Senator from Virginia believe that authorization of the use of force applies to the current circumstance in Iraq today?

Mr. WARNER. Well, I was going to speak on that later tonight when I address my colleagues and point to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD today, which contains the amendment by Senator LUGAR and myself. But, essentially, we bring to the attention of the Senate and provide the following language for the President, if I may read it, on page S 9224 of Friday's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, in our section:

> The findings that supported H.J. Res. 114, Public Law 107–243, which was enacted in 2002 and which authorized the President to use the Armed Forces of the United States against Iraq, require review and revision.

So, Senator, I have gone on record, together with my colleague, Senator LUGAR, that this is necessary, and we further call on the President—and I read the bill.

Mr. LEVIN. What section are you reading?

Mr. WARNER. Reading section 3 of my amendment, and it is on page S 9224 of Friday's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Mr. LEVIN. What section of the bill?

Mr. WARNER. It is our amendment, it is on page 14 of our amendment.

Mr. LEVIN. Is there a number?

Mr. WARNER. The amendment is at the desk, on page 14.

Mr. LEVIN. If the Senator would yield so we can follow him, I wondered if there is a number in front of the paragraph you are reading.

Mr. WARNER. I will hand you my copy.

Mr. LEVIN. Section 14.

Mr. WARNER. I wanted to read the important second sentence—I actually wrote this provision myself; Senator LUGAR concurred in it—the second sentence, after addressing the fact that we felt it required review by the Congress of the United States. That is the one required under the appropriations bill language, which we passed here—not passed; 50-some-odd Senators voted for it when I put it up.

Therefore, as part of the September 15th, 2007, report, Congress expects that the President will submit to Congress a proposal to revise Public Law 107–243.

So Senator LUGAR and I come foursquare and address that issue straighton. There is concern. I was one of the four Senators who wrote the language, and if I may engage my colleagues, the law, 107–243, provided support for U.S. diplomatic efforts. That is section 2.

The Congress of the United States supports the efforts by the President to

(1) strictly enforce through the United Nations Security Council all relevant Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq, and encourages him in those efforts; and

(2) obtain prompt and decisive action by the Security Council to ensure that Iraq abandons its strategy of delay, evasion, and noncompliance and promptly and strictly complies with all relevant Security Council resolutions.

Section 3. Authorization for the use of United States Armed Forces.

That is the provision Senator LUGAR and I address in our amendment. That authorization is very short, and I would like to engage in the reading of it.

Authorization for use of United States Armed Forces. The President is authorized to use the Armed Forces of the United States as he determines to be necessary and appropriate in order to

(1) defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq; and

(2) enforce all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

So one is the benchmark, the underlying statement by the Congress which gives rise to the actions today to support the President, but I believe that in view of all that has transpired in the nearly 5 years—this will be 5 years since we passed this in October—it is the duty of the Congress to review it, and we have asked in our amendment for the President to come forth with proposals.

Mr. DURBIN. If the Senator will yield, I would like to ask a very pointed question. And I think I know the answer, but I want to get his opinion. Does the Senator from Virginia believe that today this administration is using military force in Iraq beyond the scope of our authorization for the use of force in October of 2002?

Mr. WARNER. I think the President can still act within that language right there—defend the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq. The Government of Iraq that existed at the time this was written is gone; that was Saddam Hussein. There is a new government there. But they, unfortunately, have not exercised the full control, the full reins of sovereignty that the people of Iraq, voting freely, have given them. We set up the structure, the infrastructure that enabled those votes to take place, and we gave them a measure of security so that they could go to the polls and vote. But, in my judgment, this language still underpins the President's actions.

I would remind the Senator, in a way, each authorization act of the armed services, since enactment of this law, in a sense de facto confirms the President's authority that he is exercising under it. We never challenged him in a single—I think I counted up 4 authorization bills and probably 10 different appropriations bills that have been passed authorizing the President to use these funds.

Again, it is sort of de facto recognition that the language still stands. But my thought is that the American people, the world is entitled to Congress addressing it and, hopefully, we can resolve it and put down in greater detail the authority that the Congress wishes to give the President as he moves forward, having hopefully given the Congress the benefit of such revisions in policy as he deems necessary in early October this year.

Mr. DURBIN. I might say to the Senator from Virginia, I am going to yield because I wish to allow the Senator from Michigan, if he wishes, to continue this colloquy. But I wish to say what the Senator from Virginia has said is troubling to me as an individual Senator in this regard. I was one of 23 Senators who voted against the authorization of the use of force in Iraq. I believed it was wrong. My position did not prevail.

Mr. WARNER. That is this bill we are discussing became law.

Mr. DURBIN. The majority position in the Senate at that time, even the majority position on my side of the aisle, voted for the authorization of force.

I had believed, and this goes back to earlier service in the House, that once Congress has spoken before the Nation, we move forward together. That is why I have supported the appropriations necessary for the forces in the field, even though I disagree with the policy and voted against the authorization of force. I have always believed they deserve to have the training, the equipment, whatever is necessary, to come home safely.

I would say to the Senator from Virginia, his observation a moment ago is troubling. I don't wish to put words in his mouth, but when I asked whether we were asking beyond the scope of the original authorization, the Senator from Virginia said that with each subsequent Defense authorization bill and appropriations bill, we were reauthorizing. I use that word, but I don't want to presume the Senator said that word. That is how I interpret it.

Mr. WARNER. I said those words. I stand by those words. I said ''de facto'' because there was every available means in the course of the debate on our authorizations bill for colleagues to come and challenge this. No one did.

As a matter of fact, the first reference to this occurred when I was chairman of the committee and I remember, it was last fall—I think it was General Abizaid, I asked him about this very provision. It is in the RECORD. I said I was concerned about whether there was an obligation of Congress to go back and review this language and determine whether it comports with the various missions he was performing at the direction of the President.

I can't recall exactly what his responses were. But I did raise this. That is the very reason I asked Senator LUGAR to join me in raising it again. I think it is incumbent upon the Congress to debate it. But we certainly have passed by and legislated many times, with full knowledge that this is the basis on which the funds we have appropriated are being utilized for the forces.

Mr. DURBIN. I might say to the Senator from Virginia, I have been asked to file a motion, which I am going to do at this time. I will send this to the desk.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, we will go off the colloquy for that purpose?

AMENDMENT NO. 2252 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2241

Mr. DURBIN. Yes. I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] proposes an amendment numbered 2252 to amendment No. 2241.

The amendment is as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

This section shall take effect one day after the bill's enactment.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that no motions to commit be in order prior to the cloture votes on Wednesday.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I yield the floor and thank the Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. I thank my colleague. We did get part way into one of the pending amendments, and that is the amendment of Senator MCCONNELL. I wish we had gotten one paragraph further and that is the National Intelligence Estimate, its conclusions. As a matter of fact, I understand another updated intelligence estimate is soon going to be received by the Congress and the American public. The National Intelligence Estimate states:

Al-Qaida would attempt to use Anbar province to plan further attacks outside of Iraq;

Neighboring countries would consider actively intervening in Iraq; and

Sectarian violence would significantly increase in Iraq accompanied by massive civilian casualties and displacement.

That is my concern with the Levin amendment. If we go in and announce with concrete law as to what our tactics should be, and we have this fixed timetable, with all due respect to my friend, I cannot support that.

I thank my colleague.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Virginia and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, we are talking about some very serious

issues that impact the life and safety of our soldiers whom we have called on to serve us in Iraq. It is a matter the American people care about, and we owe them the most careful study.

To my distinguished colleague, the assistant Democratic majority leader, Senator DURBIN, I would say one thing about a change in strategy. We voted to change our strategy. We voted 80 to 14, 53 days ago, to change our strategy, to send General Petraeus and fund the surge that is going on in Iraq. That is our strategy. We just voted on this. In fact, a few weeks ago, the last part of that surge arrived in Iraq. What, are we going to change it again, this month?

Later this week, we will vote on the Levin amendment to decide whether to change, again, our strategy in Iraq. Changing strategy by Congress during a time of war, particularly making changes that are opposed by the military and our Commander in Chief, is not a small matter. Our decisions deal with war and how to achieve peace and will affect the safety and the mission of those magnificent men and women who now serve us in Iraq.

For the busy American, the casual observer, and even the world citizen, it may be this is an appropriate time to vote on this subject again. Certainly, the frustration in our country and inside all of us is high and we are deeply concerned.

I would note that I think all of us agree that quite a number of errors have taken place in our military actions in Iraq. I suggest perhaps the most serious error was our belief that we could, too readily, alter this Government in Iraq and create a new government that would be effective virtually overnight.

That is contrary to good, conservative principles. These people in Iraq have never had a heritage of a functioning government other than brutality, and it is very difficult to do. I think we are finding out it is very difficult to do. It can't be done as quickly as many of us would like to have thought when this activity was begun some years ago.

But with regard to this change in policy, I suggest the Members in the Senate know better. We know it is not appropriate to be changing our policy again. We know that any nation, especially one that aspires to be a great nation, must deal with these life-and-death matters with maturity and sound judgment. We know if we were to lift our eyes off politics and emotion, that our country, striving to do good, is facing a most difficult challenge in Iraq. Things have not gone well. Our terrorist enemies are watching our politics with great interest. Sometimes they play us like a Stradivarius. And so our allies are watching. So, indeed, is the whole world. The terrorists are quite sophisticated and strive to produce a continuous series of bloody headlines to affect American public opinion. Our judgment, our character, our principles, our very souls are being tested. But this Nation has faced tough times before.

Don't we remember the history of Washington at Valley Forge or the burning of our own Capitol by the British in 1812 or the brutal bloody Civil War or the massive deaths in World War I or the attack on Pearl Harbor or the Italian campaign, the ferocious battles for Iwo Jima, Okinawa, D–Day, the Battle of the Bulge or the Chosin Reservoir in the Korean war? These are major moments in American history, and blunders in strategy and tactics and timing occurred in almost every one of them. Many errors occurred. Failures that cost lives unnecessarily, placed our Nation at greater risk than was necessary. But that is the nature of war.

Enemies lose a great deal of sleep trying to figure out what the weaknesses are of their adversary and trying to exploit that, and frequently they are successful, to a point. But certainly it is appropriate, even in times of war, that the Congress question and challenge the Commander in Chief and our military generals. But that challenge must be, no matter how vigorous, responsible, and honest. Our domestic politics are quite partisan, true; and, frankly, I have been a little disappointed at the nature of the debate I have heard this afternoon. Republican this and Republican that and President Bush this and President Bush that—it sounds more like politics than a sincere effort to reach the proper decision about what our future course should be.

Still, no one should deny that a congressional response to a war, a war that over three-quarters of us voted to authorize, should rise above political gain. With some exceptions, this Congress I think has done so.

Truly, there is great concern in our land about the war in Iraq. It is real and justified. I readily admit my concern. I will admit I am not able to state with certainty today what our long-term course should ultimately be or how this will all play out in the end. Therefore, I do not contest the sincerity of those who will disagree with my conclusions.

I can only state my views honestly and forthrightly because that is what I have been elected to do, and that is what our soldiers who depend on us for support expect of me.

First, I strongly believe this Nation cannot flop around, changing its policy from month to month. That would be immature. It would result in bad execution of this military effort, this war. It would demoralize our soldiers who are walking the streets of Iraq this very moment because we sent them there.

Additionally, this Congress funded their military operations. We funded them. Our duly elected President, our Commander in Chief, has directed the policy with the advice of his commanders in the field. That is what it is. That is what is going on. That is what is happening.

Now we had a great debate in April and May over whether to fund the so called ''surge'' that President Bush and the Defense Department requested. This is the surge that has, a few weeks ago, reached its full strength. After the full debate, Congress could have said no to the President on his request for the surge and not provided those funds.

Fourteen Senators did vote no. But we said yes by an overwhelming vote of 80 to 14. On May 24, less than 2 months ago, we authorized the surge and, more importantly, we passed an emergency supplemental to fund this surge. Nothing required us in Congress to do that. We concluded it was the right thing to do, considering the serious alternatives that existed.

Because of the concerns we all had at that time, we required an interim report on July 15th, which has been received on time. We also called for a complete report from General Petraeus, in September, on the status of his efforts and our soldiers' work.

Of course, we had voted to confirm General Petraeus by a vote of 99 to 0 to command this operation. There was no mistake then concerning the seriousness of the situation we were in. As General Petraeus described the challenge:

> It is difficult but not impossible.

We were in no way misled about the difficulties we faced, nor were we unaware of the most serious ramifications of a failure in Iraq.

Thus, on May 24, this Congress, with an overwhelming majority, said: Let's go with the surge. But we said: General Petraeus, we will expect you to give us a full, complete, and honest report in September as to how it is going with the good and the bad, and set out specific benchmarks we want you to address. That he promised to, do, and off he went.

Yet even before the personnel who were to be deployed to effect this surge had even arrived in Iraq, the Democratic majority leader, Senator REID, who voted for the surge, to my dismay, declared it a failure. While the troops were still arriving, the Democratic leader, the majority leader of the Senate, declared the surge a failure.

To me it is unthinkable that this Congress would pull the plug on this operation before it has had a fair chance to work, and we have had a fair chance to evaluate its effectiveness. We voted for it 53 days ago. What must the world community think, friend and adversary alike? Does not such immaturity of action reflect poorly on us as a nation? Nothing has occurred since that time of decision in May to justify concluding that the situation in Iraq has significantly changed for the worse? In fact, there are indications that some improvements have occurred. We know that General Petraeus, last year, after two tours in Iraq, 2 years over there, came home and last year wrote the Department of

Defense doctrine on how to defeat an insurgency. His expertise was much noted when we confirmed him to go take charge of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who would effectuate this effort. Nowhere in his manual did he ever suggest an insurgency could be defeated in 50 days, or 90 days, or 120 days.

Victory, we must admit—if you read his manual—takes time, diligence, determination, and smart application of politics, weaponry, and forces. His manual sets out methods for how to achieve victory against an insurgency, the methods for victory.

There is simply no basis at this point to conclude that our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have failed in executing this policy. In fact, they are moving out with vigor. After seeing a reduction of sectarian violence in Baghdad by two-thirds. This is the sectarian violence, the murders that were occurring between hit squads, Shia and Sunni, as a result of the violence kicked off by the attack by al-Qaida on the Samara mosque, and their determined, effective policy to create violence between the Shia and the Sunni. That is what al-Qaida set out to do, and they succeeded last year.

We have seen that drop by two-thirds, although bombings still occur, and the bombings are suicidal, many times with large bombs that kill large numbers of civilians in shopping areas. But today some of our troops are moving out of Baghdad into the toughest areas outside Baghdad, such as the Dyala Province, and making, it appears, progress there.

As our soldiers confront enemy strongholds, some of which have never before been cleared, they demonstrate professionalism and courage that reflect the finest qualities that have ever been demonstrated by American soldiers.

Nor, let me add, has anything occurred that suggests this new strategy is flawed and will not succeed and should be abandoned 53 days since we agreed to see it forward.

So with respect, I conclude it would be irresponsible in the extreme to have this bunch of politicians sitting in air-conditioned offices in Washington reverse a strategy we approved 53 days ago. But that is exactly what the Levin-Reed amendment would do.

I have tremendous respect for Senator LEVIN. He is a superb chairman of the Armed Services Committee. But I do not agree with him on this point. I do not believe this is right.

If you were a soldier or a marine and you had just moved into a tough terrorist neighborhood in Iraq, following the directions given to you by your President and your Congress, and you saw your comrades take casualties, maybe killed in the course of executing that policy, all in the belief that somebody up there back in Washington had finally settled on a workable plan for victory, and then before your work is half done, in less than 2 months, you learn the folks up there had now changed their mind again, how would you feel? Wouldn't you think we do not take our mission of our soldiers and what they are doing seriously?

We owe our military better than that. We owe them the same courage and character they are displaying right now. On the birthday of our Army, I was at a celebration and met a young soldier. I thanked him for his service and began to explain my concern about the long deployments we were asking them to undertake. He cut in, saying, ''Senator, we just want to win.'' Before all that is just, this Congress must not fail such men.

The Levin amendment is pernicious in more ways than I am able to discuss at this time. It must not pass. We know a full review of our policies will occur in September. We agreed on that in May. That is critically important and valuable. I support such a review. I am open minded about what we will decide to do in September.

I hope and pray we will be able to reduce the number of our soldiers and begin a mature, effective way to reduce that deployment in Iraq, but we will decide our next step then. To execute a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq now, regardless of the conditions on the battlefield, and regardless of the advice of our commanders in the field, is unthinkable. It would be a stain on this Senate for years to come.

Has anybody bothered to express an interest in what General Petraeus has to say about it? Things don't always go well. My favorite statue in Washington is one that conveys the most historical import, I think, the one of General Grant right down here in front of the Capitol. He sits astride his horse, his campaign hat pulled down, his coat wrapped around, his head tilted slightly forward, a perfect picture of determination in the face of great difficulty.

It is said 600,000 died in that war on both sides. Over 440,000 Americans died in World War II. This Nation has seen dark days before, days darker than these. So let's keep our poise and our wits about us. Let's give General Petraeus and his courageous military personnel a chance to effect the strategy we agreed on and asked him to effect.

There are other important issues I will suggest to my colleagues as we discuss the Levin amendment. I will note a few briefly.

The surge report. The language in our affirmation of the surge in May called for a report that had benchmarks for improvements in Iraq. Those benchmarks have been much commented upon, but these benchmarks for improvement did not declare that all or any of the benchmarks must be met by September or even by July 15, the time of our interim report. They were to be objective markers by which we could judge progress and lack of it, and they were surely not exhaustive of every issue and challenge we faced in Iraq.

The fact that progress has been made in only half of those benchmark areas does not mean, of course, we should now up and declare the new operation a failure and that we should now cut and run. How could anyone conclude this July 15 report that shows limited early progress in only some areas means General Petraeus has failed? All the extra soldiers arrived there only 3 weeks ago.

It is also important to note that the benchmarks seemed to focus on the performance we wish to see by the central government, and they have not been meeting their responsibilities, in my view. I had my sixth visit there this spring. I was able to share that view and that frustration of the American people with the top leaders in Iraq, including Prime Minister Maliki. We believe they need to do more in the central government.

But, for example, the benchmarks provided no credit at all for the stunning progress that has occurred in the al-Anbar region, progress that has resulted at the ground level where Sunni tribal leaders have partnered with the marines to rout whole groups of al-Qaida operatives.

Similar progress, though smaller, it appears, seems to be occurring in other areas at the local level. So the benchmarks do not consider those events and whether progress is being made, but they are important as we evaluate what our situation truly is. We must remember that while sectarian violence continues, and it has occurred in large part as a direct result of al-Qaida's strategy to foment it, safety and security in the capital city is important in furthering political reconciliation.

I wish I could agree with the idea of my able colleague Senator LEVIN when he declared that peace and security in Iraq can only come as a result of a political settlement. Thus, he would suggest if a parliament cannot settle all of the difficult political issues on the timetable we set, we must leave, because this is the only thing that will make them agree on policy, our threatening to leave, and our actual leaving, it appears, because his amendment would require an actual departure from much of Iraq.

Well, I wish it were so easy. But, in truth, our commanders believe, our State Department believes, and I believe, it is far more complicated than that. Of course, a political settlement and reconciliations are critical to any long-term stability. But will not a reduction of violence and a more secure Baghdad be an event that will make political progress more possible? That is what the generals are telling us, that when the capital city is in a constant state of violence and disorder, how can we expect the Parliament to be able to function and to provide a peaceful settlement of the disputes that need to be settled long term for a healthier Iraq?

I think we have a new strategy. We voted on it 53 days ago. We agreed to

fund it. That is what the Congress does, we either put up the money or we do not put up the money. By a vote of 80 to 14 we put up the money to fund this strategy. We asked for a report in September, and now we have an amendment that has garnered quite a lot of political headlines and provided a lot of forums, a lot of ability to come forward on the floor of the Senate to attack President Bush and Republicans, but it is not a very responsible thing.

The responsible thing is for us to do what we said 53 days ago—to demand a full, complete, and honest report by General Petraeus in September, and at that point to evaluate the situation in Iraq and establish a strategy and a policy going forward from there that serves our national interest.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The distinguished Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I rise to discuss an amendment I can't offer right now because of the parliamentary situation, but I would like to discuss the amendment with my colleagues so they know it is coming and what it does.

My amendment to the Department of Defense authorization bill is meant to strengthen our efforts to verify if people in the United States are here legally to do their work. It deals with the Department of Defense because when it comes to the Department itself and to contractors who do Defense Department work, we ought to make sure that everybody who is working here has been here legally. That is for two reasons: One, because that is what the law says. You should not be in the country if you don't have the permission of our Government legally to be here. No. 2, one of the things we are concerned about in enforcing of the immigration laws is to make sure that terrorists don't get into the country. We should be particularly concerned that we don't have people with terrorist connections working for our contractors or working for the Government itself.

Without a doubt, we have an illegal immigration problem. That was evident from the legitimate hoorah people raised against the bill and against the amnesty provisions of it and the 2 weeks of debate we had this spring on the issue. People are crossing our borders each day to live and work in the United States. Some of these individuals may have innocent motives but some may not. There may be some illegal or undocumented individuals living in the shadows who aim to bypass law enforcement and do our country harm. We don't live in a pre-9/11 world anymore, so we must do all we can to protect our country and our assets.

My amendment would do two things. First, it would require all Federal Government agencies and departments to use what we call the basic pilot program, also known as the Electronic Employment Verification System. This would be for all departments of Government. I will soon demonstrate that a lot of departments are already doing it. But we ought to, particularly in a bill such as this, make sure the Department of Defense is using it in every respect.

The second part of the amendment would require all Department of Defense contractors to use the basic pilot to check the eligibility of their workers. The reason this is needed and why it is appropriate in the bill before us is, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 makes it unlawful for employers to knowingly—and I emphasize ''knowingly''—hire and employ aliens not eligible to work in this country. It required employers to check the identity and work eligibility documents for all new employees.

Today, if the documents provided by an employee reasonably appear on their face to be genuine, then the employer has met its document review obligation, and it has reason to believe it hired somebody who was legally in the country. So they are off the hook. They can't be fined or any other action taken against the employer. But beyond those documents, the employer cannot solicit any additional documents from the worker, or they would face allegations of employment discrimination. The easy availability, as we all know, of counterfeit documents has made a mockery of that law that we passed in 1986 which, quite frankly, I was here and I voted for. We thought it would solve all of our problems.

Well, we went from 1 million people being here illegally to 12 million people, so obviously it didn't solve anything. That is because fake documents are produced by the millions and can be obtained cheaply. Thus, our immigration policies benefit unscrupulous employers who do not mind hiring illegal aliens but want to show that they have met the legal requirements, and then the word ''knowingly'' being in the law, if they have reason to believe legally, even if they are here illegally, unless the employer knows absolutely they are not here illegally, then they are off the hook. The problem is, you have a lot of these employers who know that even though the documents are fraudulent, that the person is here illegally, they hire them and never get caught. So we have tried to put this basic pilot program in place to be one step beyond where we were in 1986.

Now at the same time, our policies harm employers who don't want to hire illegal aliens but have no choice but to accept those fraudulent documents that they know have a good likelihood of being that way. In response to the illegal hiring of immigrants, Congress created this basic pilot program in 1996. This program allows employers to check the status of their workers by checking one's Social Security number and alien identification number against the Social Security Administration and Homeland Security databases.

Since 1996, the system has been updated and improved. It is a Web-based program. Employers can go online quickly and very easily when hiring an individual. It has been voluntary since its inception.

The basic pilot program was originally authorized in 1996, reauthorized in 2001, and expanded and extended again in 2003. Originally, the authorization allowed six States to participate. In 2003, the extension allowed employers in all 50 States to voluntarily use the program. The immigration bill before the Senate I have already referred to, last year and this year, would have required all employers to use the basic pilot program over a period of time, meaning phasing it in. Both the administration and Congress were poised to pass legislation mandating participation and argued that this employment verification system using Social Security was crucial to enforcing the laws on the books and getting around this problem of fraudulent documents. Moreover, during the debate on immigration this year, it was argued that the system was a needed tool for employers to check the eligibility of their workers.

I had an opportunity to have a meeting way back in January of this year with Secretary Chertoff about requiring all agencies to use the system and extending the requirement to contractors that do business with the Federal Government. The Department of Homeland Security responded by saying that 403 Federal agencies are participating in the basic pilot program. Moreover, the Department claimed it was exploring ways to verify all executive branch new hires, and its goal was to ensure that all new hires in the executive branch are verified through the basic pilot program by the end of fiscal year 2007; in other words, 3 months from now.

Currently, all congressional offices are required to use the basic pilot program. My office uses this process of checking everybody who applies to work for me, and if we are going to hire them, check with the basic pilot program—in other words, Social Security—to make sure that everything matches up. Since more than 400 agencies are already using it, including congressional offices, requiring all agencies beyond the 400 to participate would seem to me to not be overly burdensome and something we ought to do if we want to make sure we don't hire people who are here illegally; and, No. 2, that the Federal Government would set an example for other employers; and, lastly, as the effort to control the border has something to do with stopping terrorists from coming to this country, to make sure that we don't have people like that working for the Federal Government.

With this goal in mind of Homeland Security to do this for all executive branch hires by the end of this fiscal year, it seems to me to be reasonable to make sure we move to make sure that it is done. My amendment, then, clarifies, as I see it, what is existing

law—that all agencies and all departments must use the basic pilot program and verify the status of their workers. My amendment is needed to push their participation in this program.

Congress and the administration would then set an example for the rest of the country. My amendment would also require those who do business with the Department of Defense to use the basic pilot program.

This gets to the second part of the bill that deals with contractors working for the Federal Government, working for the Defense Department. There have been many examples of people here illegally working at military bases and installations in the past few years. There have been instances where Government contractors are employing people who are here illegally and allowing them to work in sensitive areas. I will share some examples.

In April 2005, 86 of 167 employees of a company called Naval Coating Incorporated were found to be hired illegally. This company was a military contractor that painted ships at naval stations San Diego. More than half of this company's workers were people here illegally. Yet our Department of Defense was doing business with this company that had more than half of its people illegally employed because they were here illegally.

Last year, hundreds of illegal workers were found working for a Texas company which makes millions of ready-to-eat meals for our troops in Iraq. Last July, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement arrested more than 60 illegal immigrants at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. In January of this year, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency arrested nearly 40 illegal immigrants hired by contractors working at three military bases: Fort Benning, Creech Air Force Base, and Quantico Marine Base. One of the illegal workers was reportedly a member of the dangerous MS–13 gang.

While the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency has done its job to find unauthorized workers at secure sites, illegal aliens should not be hired in the first place. One way to get at the problem is to require them to use this basic pilot program up front like every congressional office does, or at least is supposed to do under the law. That is why my amendment is needed, requiring that those who do business with the Federal Government should be held to the same standard as our executive department agencies, of which as I said, 400, according to Secretary Chertoff, are already doing it. So you might say that half of my amendment may not be needed because he wants them all to do it. But I think we are better off if the law says that they do it, and so I included that in the amendment.

So we need to do this like other people in Government are doing to make sure it is done because we need to have the Federal Government setting an example requiring those who do business with the Federal Government to be held, then, to the same standard as our executive department agencies. This amendment will provide the tools to all employers who work with the Department of Defense and require Government agencies to lead the Nation in verifying its workers.

I know now the parliamentary situation is such that I can't offer this amendment at this point. I want to explain to everybody as I have—and why I come to the floor now—so that before this bill is voted on final passage, I think before the end of this week, we will have a chance to deal with something that I see as very important from the standpoint of making sure that laws are abided by, making sure the Federal Government as an employer is setting a good example, and making sure that we in this country use all the tools necessary to make sure that people who work for anybody using the Social Security system as that tool are here legally and can then be employed. It overcomes, then, the problems we have with fraudulent documents and, lastly, securing our borders.

Who wants to work here should be a tool to make sure terrorists are not working for anybody who works for the Government, meaning a government contractor or for a government agency. Particularly, that ought to be of most concern to us that we do not have that type of person working for the Defense Department—because of national security—or contractors who are doing work for the Defense Department, which is central to our national security.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). The distinguished Senator from Iowa.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today to reiterate my intention, along with the senior Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and the senior Senator from Nebraska, Mr. HAGEL, to offer legislation to close the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Now, again, we have decided not to offer the measure on the bill before us, the National Defense Authorization Act. But we certainly will be offering it as an amendment to the Defense appropriations bill when that bill comes to the floor. One way or another, we intend to get this legislation passed this year.

I think there is remarkable agreement on the need to find a way to close this prison. All our closest allies have urged that Guantanamo be closed, as have many leaders from across the political spectrum in the United States.

Last June, after three detainees committed suicide in a single day, President Bush acknowledged the prison has damaged America's reputation abroad. He said:

> No question, Guantanamo sends a signal to some of our friends—provides an excuse, for example, to say the United States is not upholding the values that they are trying to encourage other countries to adhere to.

The President said:

> I'd like to close Guantanamo.

More recently, Secretary of Defense Bob Gates and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice have urged the prison be shut down.

On March 23, the Washington Post, citing ''senior administration officials,'' reported that Secretary Gates had ''repeatedly argued that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, had become so tainted abroad that legal proceedings at Guantanamo would be viewed as illegitimate.''

According to the Post, Secretary Gates ''told President Bush and others that it should be shut down as quickly as possible.''

Let's make no mistake about it; the current detainees at Guantanamo do include a number of extremely dangerous terrorists, with the determination and ability—if given the opportunity—to inflict harm upon the United States and its citizens. Among the detainees are 14 senior leaders of al-Qaida, including Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who has confessed to being a mastermind of the September 11 attacks, as well as others. We must—and we can—hold these enemy combatants in maximum security conditions elsewhere.

But the critics of Guantanamo are right. The 5-year-old prison at Guantanamo is a stain on the honor of our country. By holding people at Guantanamo without charge, without judicial review, without appropriate legal counsel—and in the past subjecting many of them to what amounts to torture, regardless of how you want to dress it up—by doing all those things, we have forfeited the moral high ground and stand as hypocrites in the eyes of the world.

As Secretary Gates has argued, any legal proceedings or convictions now taking place on Guantanamo will be viewed as illegitimate in the eyes of the world.

Perhaps most seriously, from a pragmatic standpoint, maintaining the prison at Guantanamo is simply counterproductive. It has become a propaganda bonanza and recruitment tool for Islamic fundamentalists. It alienates our friends and allies. It detracts from our ability to regain the moral high ground and rally the world against the terrorists who threaten us.

The administration has repeatedly described detainees at Guantanamo as ''the worst of the worst,'' or, as former Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, once described them, the ''most dangerous, best-trained, vicious killers on the face of the earth.'' Unquestionably, some of the detainees fit these descriptions. However, an exhaustive study of Guantanamo detainees conducted by the nonpartisan and highly regarded National Journal, last year, came to the following conclusions:

A large percentage—perhaps the majority—of the detainees were not captured on any battlefield, let alone on ''the battlefield in Afghanistan,'' as President Bush once asserted.

Secondly, fewer than—fewer than—20 percent of the detainees have ever been al-Qaida members.

Third, many scores—and perhaps hundreds—of the detainees were not even Taliban foot soldiers, let alone al-Qaida members.

Fourth, the majority of the people at Guantanamo were not captured by U.S. forces but, rather, handed over by reward-seeking Pakistanis and Afghan warlords and by villagers of highly dubious reliability.

For example, one of the detainees in Guantanamo is a man who was conscripted by the Taliban to work as an assistant cook. The U.S. Government's ''evidence'' against this detainee consists, in its entirety, of the following—keep in mind, the evidence against this detainee consists, in its entirety, of the following—

a. Detainee is associated with the Taliban.

i. The detainee indicates that he was conscripted into the Taliban.

b. Detainee engaged in hostilities against the U.S. or its coalition partners.

i. The detainee admits he was a cook's assistant for Taliban forces in Narim, Afghanistan under the command of Haji Mullah Baki.

ii.

Get this—

ii. Detainee fled from Narim to Kabul during the Northern Alliance attack and surrendered to the Northern Alliance.

That is it. That is the evidence they have against this detainee. He was forced by the Taliban to be a cook. When he saw his opportunity to get out of there, he escaped and went to the northern forces and surrendered to them. Now he sits in Guantanamo.

What kind of justice is this?

Well, the situation at Guantanamo is rather personal with me. Not only was I stationed there for some time back when I was a Navy pilot—and I have since been back, of course, to visit—but more personal, in July of 1970, I was a rather young staff person for the Select Committee on U.S. Involvement in Southeast Asia of the House of Representatives. I was working with a congressional delegation on a factfinding mission to Vietnam in the summer of 1970, and through a series of circumstances—and because of the bravery of a young Vietnamese man who had been in the tiger cages on Con Son Island and who was let out—now, why was he let out? Because usually when you got to the tiger cages, you were never seen again.

Well, the South Vietnamese had these prisons put up on Con Son Island. Actually, they were built by the French when the French ruled Indo-China. So the French built these prisons on an island off the coast. The Vietnamese took them over and then built these so-called tiger cages, which were hidden within the prison so no one could find them.

Cao Nguyen Loi was sentenced to the tiger cages because he led a student protest at Saigon University. He was the student leader at Saigon University in 1969, early 1970. Because he led a protest against the war, the police picked him up. The South Vietnamese Army picked him up and sent him out to Con Son Island.

No one knew who he was. But the students refused to go back to class until their student leader was released. It was time to take the exams, and this was a big deal for families. They were putting pressure on the university, and finally the Government let Cao Nguyen Loi go. They told him at the time, though, that if he ever said anything, they would kill his brother because his brother was also in the tiger cages.

Well, this young man, very bravely, sought me out, along with Don Luce. Don Luce was a young man who I think at that time had been working for the World Council of Churches in Vietnam. If I am not mistaken, I think he was a native of Vermont. Yes, Don Luce was a native of the State of Vermont. He had been over there teaching the Vietnamese how to grow sweet potatoes, agricultural things.

Well, Don Luce had known this young man. I had sought out Don Luce because Luce had written a book about Vietnam called ''Vietnam—The Unheard Voices.'' So in preparation for this trip to Vietnam, I read the book because I felt that Congressmen should hear both sides. So I read this book. I never met Don Luce before, but I was intrigued by this book, that there was a large sector—I questioned at the time—of South Vietnamese who were opposed to the war. We were led to believe quite differently, of course.

So Don Luce brought this young man to see me to tell me about the existence of the tiger cages. These tiger cages had been rumored for a long time. In fact, the year before, in 1969, a young Congressman by the name of John Conyers went over with a Congressman, I believe it was Father Drinan, Bob Drinan, and they had inquired about the existence of the tiger cages. They were told this was Communist propaganda, no such thing existed. Our military denied it. The Nixon administration denied it. The South Vietnamese Government denied it: There was no such thing. This was Communist propaganda.

Well, this young man, who came to see me, said: They are out there because I was in them. But they told me if I talked, they would kill my brother, so I have to place my trust in you because someone has to expose them. I said: Well, I don't know if I could or not because I would have to get a couple of Congressmen to go out there. It was on an island. We had to get a plane, fly out to this remote island. It would take a whole day. Then he told me: You would not find them unless you have a map. I will draw you a map. So he sat down and he drew me a map of how to find the tiger cages. He said: Because, you see, there are a lot of prison camps on Con Son Island. There are about five different prison camps and they all look the same. Unless you know what you are looking for, you will never find the tiger cages, because they are in one prison camp and you have to know how to find them. He drew me a map. He couldn't quite remember exactly, but he knew to look for these certain symbols, these certain signs, these certain things he remembered. So I took the map.

I then went to see Congressman Gus Hawkins of California and laid this out for him and said there might be a possibility that we could find out once and for all whether these tiger cages existed. He said he would go. We needed another Congressman. William Anderson, Congressman William R. Anderson from Tennessee, when he heard the story, said: I will go.

Keep in mind, Congressman William R. Anderson had until that time been a supporter of the Vietnam war. He wrote a book once, which is one of my favorite books. It was called ''Nautilus 90 North.'' This same Congressman Anderson was the first skipper of the first nuclear submarine called the Nautilus. He was a very famous guy at the time because he was the first one who took a nuclear sub underneath the North Pole and he wrote a book about the Nautilus submarine called ''Nautilus 90 North.'' He retired from the Navy and was elected to the House from Tennessee.

Congressman Anderson, Congressman Hawkins, and I took off with Don Luce. We went out to the islands. I am not going to give you the whole story, but armed with the map, we were able to find the tiger camps. When we found them, we were told by one Red Walton, who was the USAID director—public safety director—that we had no business being there. Oh, I might say, before we got out there, this same Red Walton had told us these prison camps were more like a Boy Scout camp. They took us to some of the prison camps and they weren't all that bad for prisons, I guess. But again, armed with a map, we found the tiger cages and the suffering that we saw there, the inhumanity we saw there, was something you never shake. I was armed with a camera. I had my camera, so I took pictures. Of course, we had two Congressmen, William Anderson and Gus Hawkins, there.

Armed with that information and coming back to the States, we published the pictures and got the story out. It became a worldwide story. The prisoners were released because of the pressure that was put upon the South Vietnamese government. They then began to tell their stories. But there was one picture I took that was in Life Magazine. It was of a young Buddhist monk who looked up through the bars of these tiger cages as we looked down on him, and he said in Vietnamese—we had Don Luce as an interpreter—he said: I am here for only one reason: Because I speak out for peace, and no matter how long I stay here, I will continue to speak out for peace.

I took a picture of that young Buddhist monk. Yet before the prisoners

were all released, he was beaten to death.

While I have since gone back to Con Son Island and visited his grave, the tiger cages are now a memorial, like a museum for people to see, of all the horrors they inflicted on so many hundreds of people. People were shackled together in awful conditions—awful conditions.

This weekend I was handed a paper done by Vaughan Bagley. I visited with her. She was doing a paper on the tiger cages of Con Son. She wrote a paper about it. She did some very good research. Vaughan is a high school student, but she did a lot of great research. She went back and looked at all of the congressional hearings that were held on this, and she quoted Representative Hawkins. Representative Hawkins stated at the congressional hearings in 1970:

> Con Son is a symbol of how some American officials will cooperate in corruption and torture because they too want to see the war continued and the government they put in power protected.

Well, as she went on to point out, she said:

> Unfortunately, however, in their democratic crusade, America lost the very principles of freedom and equality that they purported to defend, and ultimately violated Article 13 of the Geneva Accords of 1949.

A former prisoner testified that the clear violation of these principles:

> No matter what medical problem the prisoner has: TB, Diphtheria, he is still thrown in with all the others who are not sick, all eat out of the same bowl, sleep together, shackled to the same rope. I know of no other place on Earth where human lives are so cheap as in Con Son.

Congressman Hawkins argued: Con Son is the type of not looking at our own faults and atrocities that endangers our American prisoners of war held by the Communists.

Vaughan Bagley did a great job on her research. What she pointed out in her paper was that in our pursuit of democratic ideals and democracy around the world, we can't condone, harbor, or support places like the tiger cages of Con Son Island, Abu Ghraib, or Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

I tell this story because now I think my colleagues get some idea of why I feel so strongly about Guantanamo. It has for me the same smell, the same awful vision of Con Son Island. You see, in both cases these prisons were off on remote islands. Why? Well, to keep away the press, to keep people from asking questions about what was going on. Once you were taken off the island, chances are you were never seen again.

That is what has happened at Guantanamo. Guantanamo has become the United States Con Son Island. It has become like the tiger cages on Con Son Island. The more the world knows about it, the harder it is for us to argue from kind of a morally high standpoint of supporting the Geneva Conventions or the rule of law.

Well, at the time of the discovery of the tiger cages, the United States Government had been insisting that the North Vietnamese abide by the Geneva Conventions. Yet here we were condoning, funding, and supervising the torture not only of Vietnamese prisoners of war but of civilians. People such as this young guide who was caught up and held by the Taliban as a cook, who escaped, who probably didn't want to fight for anybody—a clear violation of the Geneva Conventions.

There are disturbing parallels between what transpired on Con Son Island nearly four decades ago and what has happened at Guantanamo in recent years. As I said in both cases, prisons were deliberately set up on remote islands, clearly with the intention of limiting scrutiny and restricting access. In both cases, detainees were not classified as prisoners of war, expressly to deny them the protection of the Geneva Conventions. In both cases, detainees were deprived of any right to due process, judicial review, or a fair trial. They were simply held indefinitely in isolation in legal limbo. In both cases, when the mistreatment of detainees was exposed, the United States stood accused of hypocrisy and of betraying its most sacred values and violating international law.

We need to reverse the damage Guantanamo has done to our reputation and to our ability to wage an effective fight against the terrorists who attacked us on September 11 of 2001. The essential first step must be to close the prison at Guantanamo as expeditiously as possible. The legislation that Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator HAGEL, and I have would accomplish this within 1 year of the date of enactment.

Under the provisions of our legislation, one, the President shall close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay. All detainees shall be removed from the facility. No detainee shall be transferred to a detention facility under U.S. custody located outside the United States.

We heard all about these other little prisons around the world that, well, maybe they are held by other countries, but they are supervised by us. Our legislation says it can't be transferred there either. No later than 3 months after enactment, the President shall submit a report to Congress describing plans for closing Guantanamo and removing the detainees, and the President shall keep Congress currently informed of steps taken to implement the legislation.

That is basically our legislation. It is very clear, very straightforward. As I said, we were going to offer it on the Defense authorization bill. We have all agreed not to do so, but that we definitely will be seeing this coming up on the Defense appropriations.

In closing, on this issue, the United States has lost its way both in Iraq and at Guantanamo. We need to wage a smarter, more focused, and more effective fight against the Islamic terrorists who threaten us, and we must do so in ways that do not give credence to the American antipropaganda and do not rally more recruits to their cause. To that end, we must close the prison at Guantanamo as soon as possible. Our amendment has won the enthusiastic endorsement of Human Rights Watch, Human Rights First, Amnesty International, and the American Civil Liberties Union. We currently have 14 bipartisan cosponsors here in the Senate. I urge our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this legislation.

LEVIN-REED AMENDMENT

Before I yield the floor, I also want to talk for a minute on the bill—the Levin-Reed amendment—because I think it offers the best prospect for accomplishing the goals of a more focused and effective campaign against the terrorists.

For 4 long years, President Bush has said that as the Iraqis step up to their responsibilities, the United States will be able to step down. Today it is painfully clear that the opposite is the case. The Iraqi military and Government will only step up to their responsibilities once it is clear that the United States is stepping down. The Levin-Reed amendment says the United States will begin troop redeployment within 120 days and remove most American combat forces from Iraq by April of next year. This acknowledges what has long been obvious to our commanders: There can be no military solution to the mess in Iraq. At the same time, by signaling our intention to redeploy by next spring, we will create powerful incentives to force compromise within the deadlocked Iraqi Government and to compel Iraq's neighbors to play a more active and constructive role in pacifying that country.

Again, I say this only of myself, but there is no guarantee this approach will work—will succeed. There is no guarantee the Iraqis will be willing or able to compromise and come together in a genuine government of national reconciliation. However, the only certainty is that our current force is a formula for more failure, more deadlock within the Iraqi Government, more death and destruction for both Iraq and America.

New developments this past week have driven home the urgency of the change of course proposed by the Levin-Reed amendment. Last week, we learned we are now spending an astronomical $10 billion a month in Iraq. Last week, the administration issued the required progress report on the benchmarks for Iraq. What did it show? It showed the Government in Baghdad has failed to meet any of the benchmarks for political and economic reform. The Iraqis have failed to make progress in passing a law governing the sharing of oil revenues.

They have failed to make progress in allowing former Baath Party members to return to their jobs. They have failed to make progress in disarming the militias. They have failed to make progress in organizing new provincial

elections. Indeed, the only thing the Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds have agreed upon in Parliament is that they will go on vacation during the month of August.

Now, there was one glimmer of good news in the report, and that was, the U.S. military has had some success since January in improving the security situation, although the overall levels of violence and mayhem are unchanged. Well, limited success should come as no surprise to anybody. We all appreciate the professionalism, courage, and capability of our Armed Forces. It would be astonishing if an additional 30,000 troops didn't see at least some small improvement in security.

There is one unfortunate thing about this. These modest gains are all being accomplished by U.S. troops, not Iraqis. Because the surge is not sustainable, even these modest gains are ephemeral.

Meanwhile, a new report by the National Counterterrorism Center concludes that al-Qaida has grown stronger than at any time since 9/11. In other words, while the U.S. military and intelligence assets have been massively sidetracked in Iraq over the last 4 years, al-Qaida has been able to regroup elsewhere, with most in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As a CIA Deputy Director of Intelligence told a House committee:

> We see more al-Qaida training, more al-Qaida money, and more al-Qaida communication.

Indeed, the U.S. invasion of Iraq has been the gift that keeps on giving to al-Qaida. There was no al-Qaida presence in Iraq before the invasion. Now a home-grown organization, loosely affiliated with al-Qaida, calling themselves ''al-Qaida in Mesopotamia,'' has emerged. What's more, as previous intelligence reports have concluded, America's ongoing occupation of Iraq has been a powerful recruitment tool not only for al-Qaida, but for many new extremist organizations, some of them sprouting up spontaneously in western countries, including Britain and Spain.

So, Mr. President, we have reached an extraordinary juncture regarding the current failed policy in Iraq. We have reached the point, frankly, where either you side with the President and his demand that we stay the course in pursuit of what he calls victory—although the President has never really defined what that victory is—or you side with the American people and our military commanders who have concluded that there is no military solution in Iraq. You either support this endless, pointless war or you support a smaller, more focused campaign against the terrorists who truly threaten us. Those are the choices in the current Senate debate.

On our side of the aisle, we Democrats and the American people have made our choice to chart a new direction. I am confident that as more and more of our friends on the other side of the aisle make that choice in the days and weeks ahead, we will ultimately prevail.

The conflict in Iraq can only be solved through political compromise and reconciliation in Baghdad and through aggressive diplomatic engagement with Iraq's neighbors and across the Middle East. So it is time to chart a new course. The approach embodied in the Levin-Reed amendment offers us our best hope for extricating ourselves from this quagmire in Iraq and retaking the offensive against al-Qaida and other terrorist groups.

I am proud to be a cosponsor, and I urge all my colleagues to support the Levin-Reed amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma is recognized.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, first of all, let me say to my good friend from Iowa that while there are so many things in which we find ourselves in agreement as the months and years go by, in this area we find disagreement. I have to say this. I wasn't going to mention Guantanamo, but since that is a subject of interest to everybody—and it certainly has the interest of the Senator from Iowa—I only mention this. I have done this before on the Senate floor. I am very much concerned about this obsession we seem to have in this country politically to take care of these terrorists who are responsible for committing acts and killing Americans.

I was down at Guantanamo several times. One time was right after everything started escalating and they started arriving there. Everybody was concerned about the methods of questioning these individuals, interrogating the prisoners. I remember going down and seeing a lot of them doing everything they could to antagonize the troops that we had down there to police that situation. It was really kind of pitiful. You sit there and look at these people, and these are prisoners who probably have never eaten better in their lives, have never had better medical attention in their lives, have never really lived better than they are living in Guantanamo. Yet these are individuals who are terrorists. These are the worst, and some have killed Americans. We all seem to have this propensity to be more concerned about them than we are for the lives of Americans.

I want to give a different perspective. I have had the honor, I believe, of being in the Iraqi AOR—not always in Iraq, but the area of responsibility—more than any other Member. I have watched this on a monthly basis since we have gotten into this thing. As I look at it, I very carefully chose the word of ''invasion'' on Iraq as opposed to a ''liberation'' of Iraq.

I remember so well right after the first Iraqi war, I was honored to go over to Iraq the day that it was actually declared to be over. This was in Kuwait City. We had a thing called the ''first freedom flight.'' Tony Cohelo was on that flight with me. Certainly, the Chair remembers him well.

We also had one of the Kuwaiti nobility and his young daughter with us at the time. We got there, and they were burning the oil fields. It was obscure. Even during the daylight hours you could not see anything. The Iraqis didn't know that the war was over—those who were down there at that time. I remember so well seeing the devastation.

This little girl, I think, was 7 years old at the time. They wanted to go back to Kuwait to go to their mansion on the Persian Gulf, a beautiful place, so she could go up in her bedroom and see her little dolls and animals. I remember going up there with her, and we found out that their residence had been used as one of Saddam Hussein's torture chambers. I remember going up to her bedroom with her and, in fact, that bedroom had been used as a torture chamber, one of Saddam Hussein's headquarters. There were body parts—ears, hands, just strewn all around the room. You thought: What kind of a monster could this Saddam Hussein be? This guy had spent 30 years of his life terrorizing his fellow citizens. We saw things like a little boy with his ear cut off. He was 9. The reason it was done was he had a little American flag in his pocket, and I guess they found that on him, and they considered that to be inappropriate.

Looking into mass graves and hearing the stories of individuals going through grinders and begging to go head first so they would not torture them quite as long, being dropped into vats of acid, begging to be dropped in feet first. These are the kinds of terrorists that we are talking about over there. This is what Iraq was like. This is what Saddam Hussein was like.

While I don't want to get into the debate about weapons of mass destruction, I never had that as the argument. It is a fact that training was taking place there; whether it was al-Qaida or not we don't know. In Salman Pak in Iraq, they were training terrorists to hijack airplanes. Whether they trained in that area the particular 9/11 perpetrators, I have no way of knowing. Nonetheless, this is something that had to be—all you had to do was look into the mass graves and hear the stories about weddings taking place and how they would raid them and rape the women and bury them alive. That was the scene, and that is what we were doing over there.

I really came to the floor to voice my objection to the Levin-Reed amendment, No. 2087. Winston Churchill once said:

> Never, never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy. . . . Always remember, however sure you are that you could easily win, that there would not be a war if the other man did not think he also had a chance.

That was just as true in World War II when Churchill made the statement as

it is today. Today, we face an enemy that is determined and willing to go to any means of terror and violence to win. He cannot be negotiated with. You cannot negotiate with a terrorist. We keep hearing that we need to negotiate with them, but we cannot do that. They will not be satisfied until the whole world is brought under their dreadful ideology. We have seen this kind before in Stalin and Hitler, but never before has our enemy metastasized this way.

In a way, you could say it is more dangerous now than it was back then during Hitler and Stalin because the mentality is different. These are people who want to die and who are willing to die. This is their way of going to heaven. It is a totally different environment than under the other cultures in the different wars. There is no centralized headquarters or one leader that we can eliminate. There is no country involved. I don't think we have ever been involved in a war against an enemy who didn't have a country. When you defeat a country, you win the war. Well, there is nothing centralized that we can point to. Victory would come the way it always has: Destroy the enemy, undermine the support network, and expose the fact that they cannot win.

Any plan to leave Iraq before we have had a chance to understand the outcome of the troop surge tells the enemy, first of all, they have been successful and that their methods worked. Those individuals who were perpetrating the crimes of terrorism will come back and do them again. It gives them patience to wait us out.

Do you believe they do not watch our news or that they are not watching us right now, scouring our media for any chink in our resolve? Their survival depends on it, and they cannot win by force of arms. They can only win by attacking our resolve.

Our country represents the light of freedom and democracy. Yet I fear that we have begun a terrible introspective and downward cycle. Our resolve lasts for a few months, or maybe a year, but all it takes is enough time and then we break. Our enemy knows this. Look at our mission in Somalia. I remember it so well. So does the Presiding Officer. They were dragging the naked bodies through the streets of Mogadishu and our resolve was broken. Look at our reaction to the bombings in Lebanon at Khobar Towers. Look at Vietnam.

I am saying that we have to realize that while this introspection guarantees our freedom, it is also our greatest weakness. I recognize there have been mistakes made in Iraq. In his January 10 speech, the President also recognized this and has taken full responsibility for mistakes, which are made in every war. Yet we still find ourselves in difficult situations about the best way ahead.

These decisions affect many lives, both of our soldiers and the American people they pledged to protect.

We should debate. That is what the Senate body intends to do. It is what we have been doing. But how we fight and when we leave will determine the fight our grandchildren face. I think we all agree that it would be disastrous to leave Iraq precipitously. If we do, we know what we can expect: increased levels of violence and the spread of extremist ideology. Iraq itself would collapse into anarchy. We know this.

A personal friend of mine, DIA Director General Maples, said this:

> Continued coalition presence is the primary counter to a breakdown in central authority. Such a breakdown would have grave consequences for the people of Iraq, stability in the region, and U.S. strategic interests.

DNI John Negroponte and CIA Director General Hayden have also agreed with that statement and analysis. It is not too late to avoid this breakdown. I don't think it is time to start cutting our losses and hope all of this will somehow disappear, somehow it will go away. If we can assist Iraq to reach the point of sustainable self-governance, then we can bring defeat to our enemies and bring stability to the region. We all want this to happen.

To those who say we cannot win, I look to Bosnia. I have to say, Mr. President, I was wrong in this case. That was a situation that many said and I said was intractable, that we would be bogged down for years and suffer thousands of casualties. I really believed this situation. I went back to Bosnia. It is peaceful. This is directly because of our military involvement. So I learned a lesson in Bosnia.

When I heard President Bush ask for our support for a troop surge, I heard the same message from many soldiers whom I have talked to in Baghdad, Fallujah, Tikrit, Balad, Mosul, and other areas. They said they want to fight the enemy there and not at home. This is what the troops have told me on these 14 trips I have made over there. They said they are in a fight to win and that they will accomplish the mission. Their morale is very high, and they back this up by reenlisting in record numbers.

I watched one of the Sunday shows, and they are trying to say: Look at the dissatisfying level. You can ask a question of all the troops over there and pull out some kind of answer that can be misinterpreted. The true test is those individuals who are fighting the hardest and facing the most risk are the very ones who have the highest reenlistment rate we have seen in modern history. We are seeing reenlistments in record numbers right now, and the sacrifice our service men and women pay demand we pursue every possibility to leave stability in our wake.

The permanent Iraqi Government has only been in power since May. Many of the leaders have never had any kind of opportunity to run any kind of government before, let alone under the terrible circumstances they face. While Saddam was in power, they were in jail or were in exile. They were on the outside. Now they have to build coalitions and a democracy that took us many years to achieve in this country. I think sometimes we forget that fact.

Last week, Hassan al-Suneid, a Shiite legislator and adviser to Prime Minister al-Maliki, was quoted in the Washington Post. This is what he said, an adviser to al-Maliki:

> If the Americans withdraw, the militias and the armed groups will attack each other, and that means a sure civil war. What concerns me really is that U.S. troops might submit to the Democrats' decision and withdraw without thinking about Iraq's situation and what will happen to the Iraqi people.

We owe it to the sacrifice of the brave servicemember, we owe it to the Iraqi people, and we owe it to our children and grandchildren. Give our soldiers everything they need to win, and if Iraq doesn't step up, then it will be time to go but not until then.

We haven't given enough time to see if the surge is working. July 15 was supposed to be an interim White House update. We know the 16 benchmarks. It is my understanding eight are proceeding as planned, eight are not, and two are mixed signals. We know the surge has enabled a number of things to happen, such as a new engagement strategy, which I will talk about in a minute. It is called the joint security stations. We have gotten a huge increase in tips. Tips are pieces of information that come from the Iraqi people that tell us where IEDs are, that tell us where individuals are, where terrorists are. These are the qualified tips. They are accelerating on a daily basis. It has enabled us to stage offensives throughout Iraq without significantly diluting our troops in Baghdad. It has enabled the commanders to chase down al-Qaida and keep them from regrouping and attacking areas that have been historical sanctuaries of al-Qaida.

September 15 is when General Petraeus will give us a report. Let's not forget, that is what the law says. We passed a law. We passed a law either in March or May. The law says September 15 is the date he will come forth, this great general, General Petraeus, who is over there right now. It will give him time to say what our situation is and what we should do if a change is necessary. We owe it to him at this time.

A total surge, of course, has just been in place for 2 weeks. We have some good indicators that the time to make that kind of change is September. We cannot change the terms of the deal now. That was the deal, and that is written into law.

My colleague Senator DEMINT stated it well:

> If we're going to govern effectively, we can't change our minds every week.

Let's not give a knee-jerk reaction to the headlines of IEDs and sectarian killings. This is exactly what the enemy is aiming its propaganda toward. I recognize this is not the fight we thought we were going to be getting

into, but it is the fight that is before us now.

I admire Prime Minister Maliki's assessment. I quote him again:

> A fundamental struggle is being fought on Iraqi soil between those who believe that Iraqis, after a long nightmare, can retrieve their dignity and freedom, and others who think that oppression is the order of things and that Iraqis are doomed to a political culture of terror, prisons and mass graves.

I want to share one last point. Before I do, I want to put up a chart. If my colleagues will remember, we had the Webb amendment which would have dictated terms of how we do our troops deployments. At that time, I used this chart. We have to keep in mind that one of the problems we had in orchestrating a surge and trying to address this now is that we went through a pretty tough climb back in the 1990s.

As this chart shows, if we look at the black line, this is the 1993 baseline increase by inflation. In other words, if we did just what we took in 1993 and only increased it by inflation, this is where we would be in the year 2000. The Clinton administration is represented by this red line. If we take the difference between the status quo and what his recommendation was in his budget, it is $412 billion total. We, in our wisdom, saw we were able to raise it to this green line in the middle. But it still is $313 billion less.

I suggest that a lot of that represents our troop levels because the most expensive thing we have in defense is the troop levels. We are in the situation now where we have to see if this is going to work, if it changes, the surge, General Petraeus and all his efforts are taking place.

I mentioned the President's speech of January 10. I did it for a reason because I went back and reread that speech. If you read it, it talks about the victory being in a bottoms-up situation. In other words, instead of the top down, from the top political leaders down, it is going to be from the roots, from the people in these various communities. That is exactly what I witnessed.

Mr. President, I will share with you what I witnessed the last time I was there. Keep in mind that just a few weeks ago, long before the full surge effect was taking place, I spent a lot of time in Anbar Province in Ramadi, Fallujah, as well as in Baghdad. I saw some changes. I think a lot of it was due to the fact that we have had a lot of the cut-and-run or surrender resolutions and the Iraqi people are very much concerned that is what we are going to do, and that all of a sudden got their attention.

What I will share with you, Mr. President, I know we spend a lot of time and it is important we talk about the political leaders. Al-Maliki, we do talk about him. He is the Prime Minister. We talk about Prime Minister Jasim and Dr. Rubaie. What I noticed last time is a bottoms-up dramatic improvement, not coming from the political leaders but the religious leaders. This is what I witnessed.

My colleagues might remember, we stood on the Senate floor a year ago and said the terrorists are saying Ramadi will become the terrorist capital of the world. Now Ramadi is secure. If you go next door to Fallujah—and we remember the World War II type of door-to-door activities that were taking place there. The marines did a miraculous job, but Fallujah at the time I got over there on this last trip was secure. The important thing is it was secured by the Iraqi security forces. They were the ones providing security at that time.

I mentioned a minute ago the joint security stations. This is a bottoms-up type of thing. I noticed in Baghdad, where, instead of our troops going out into the field and coming back to the Green Zone at night, they stayed out there. They bed down in the homes with the Iraqi forces. I talked with people who experienced this, theirs and ours. I didn't see that in any of the previous trips over there.

If I can single out one thing that is causing the bottoms-up improvement we have seen so far as a result of this surge announcement that was made just a few months ago, it would be the attitude of the clerics and the imams in the mosques. We monitor these, by the way. Our intelligence is at all these mosque meetings where they meet once a week. As most of us do on Sunday in our churches, mosques meet at different times. Nonetheless, they have weekly services. In weekly services prior to January of this year, 85 percent of the messages that were given in the mosques by the clerics were anti-American messages. They started reducing, and by April we went through the entire month without one mosque giving an anti-American message. That is why we are getting the support of the people, the bottoms-up we are talking about and the President was talking about back on January 10. We are seeing these individuals doing the same thing.

I don't think there is a person watching us or present in this Chamber today who isn't from a State that has such programs as the Neighborhood Watch Programs. That is what they have over there right now, and they are watching and they are going around with spray cans and spraying circles around undetonated IEDs so that our troops don't get into them. This is the type of cooperation we have not seen before.

This is what the President asked for on January 10. I think anything prior to our legal timeline of September 15 and getting an ultimate report from General Petraeus would be a great disservice to our fighters over there as well as to Iraqis.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I thank the senior Senator from Rhode Island for allowing me to go ahead of him to deliver some remarks on the general Department of Defense authorization bill. Senator REED has not only been a strong supporter of our military, but he has an understanding that is unique for somebody who is a West Point graduate. As we move forward with this debate on Iraq, his understanding of Iraq is second to none, given the fact that he has been with this issue from the beginning. He has made 10 trips into Iraq to understand the situation on the ground. We very much look forward to his continuing leadership and contribution to the debate.

Today, I rise because I want to praise the work of Chairman LEVIN, Senator WARNER, Senator MCCAIN, Senator REED, Senator NELSON, and the members of the Armed Services Committee for developing a very good, excellent product for us to consider in the Department of Defense authorization bill.

As the Senate debates this week on the keystone issue of our time with respect to U.S. involvement in Iraq, we must not lose sight of the importance of maintaining a strong national defense. That strong national defense is what is at the heart of the 2008 Department of Defense Authorization Act.

The bill is a strong statement of support for our men and women in uniform. It gives our military the tools it needs to confront an increasingly complex and dynamic set of threats that we face around the world. It is a bill that will help assure our military remains the best equipped, the best trained, and the best led fighting force in the world. Today, our men and women in uniform are serving honorably around the world. In the mountains of Afghanistan, they are tracking and killing al-Qaida and resurgent Taliban operatives who are resisting the move toward democracy. In Iraq, they are confronting the monumental task of stabilizing and rebuilding a country that is caught in the middle of sectarian violence and a spiraling, what many of us have concluded is an intractable civil war. In the horn of Africa, in the Balkans, and elsewhere, they are looking to bring peace, hope, and security to those war-torn areas of the world.

I am immensely proud of the work of our troops both abroad and at home, for our National Guard, Reserve, and Active-Duty troops protect our homeland and help us respond to the threats of hurricanes, fires, and floods. I know all my colleagues share the appreciation I have for the work of our military, and I know this shared appreciation gives us much common ground from which to work. We all agree that our military must remain the strongest and best equipped in the world, that our Nation's defense is the Federal Government's top priority, and that our military families and our veterans deserve the best our Nation can provide. Because we agree on these principles, this bill rests on a solid, bipartisan foundation, and it is a bill we

must pass in Congress and let it be signed by the President. Unfortunately, in the press you won't hear much about many of the provisions that are in this bill, and we won't hear much about where we do see eye to eye and what we have a consensus on with respect to the DOD bill. You probably won't hear much about how we agree we need to expand our military, that our troops need to have more MRAPs, Strykers, and other equipment in the field immediately; that more resources are needed to protect our troops from IEDs; that our assets in space are too vulnerable to disruption or attack; that we need to continue to bolster our military warning and defense system, and so on. We won't hear much of that in the debate here in the week ahead.

But the fact is this bill comes to us at a critical time in our Nation and it is one of the largest steps this body has ever taken toward strengthening our defense, refurbishing our military—which is under so much strain in these times—and making good on our promises to care for our military families and our veterans.

I want to briefly illustrate the impact this bill will have by briefly describing how it will help our troops and their families in my State of Colorado. We in Colorado are proud to be the home of some of the crown jewels of our Nation's defense and homeland security. Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, Buckley Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the Air Force Academy are all in my home State of Colorado, as are the headquarters for Air Force Space Command and Northern Command.

I have spent a lot of time at those bases meeting with our military leaders, and the commanders there are clear about their needs and their priorities. I am pleased to report to them that the Armed Services Committee, in the bill now being considered by this Chamber, has transferred many of their priorities into the bill and will make them a reality if we can get this bill signed by the President of the United States. Those priorities include: military construction, equipment, weapon systems, and health care—those things that are important to make our military strong.

The military construction authorization in this bill will help us keep on track with BRAC realignments and needed infrastructure improvements. At Fort Carson in Colorado we are in the midst of a very significant BRAC-directed expansion that will almost double the size of the Mountain Post. Two additional brigades are coming to Colorado Springs, and we are doing all we can as a community to welcome these soldiers and their families to Colorado.

The bill includes $470 million in authorization for military construction at Fort Carson, some of which will go to the construction of a new headquarters for the 4th Infantry Division and a new brigade complex for the 1st Brigade, and new barracks for our soldiers.

For the Colorado National Guard at Buckley Air Force Base in Denver, CO, we have added an authorization for $7.3 million for a squadron operations facility to replace an outdated structure that houses the F–16s of the 140th Air Wing of the Colorado National Guard.

On the equipment side, this bill responds to the rapidly growing needs of the services to refurbish, replace, and modernize equipment that is being worn out in Iraq and Afghanistan. Recognizing that the President's request for equipment for our troops was not sufficient, this bill expands the authority for war-related procurement by over $12 billion. I am particularly encouraged with the bill's inclusion of $4.1 billion to fulfill the military services' unfunded requirements for MRAP vehicles, whose V-shaped hulls are proving invaluable in reducing casualties from IEDs. This builds on an effort Senator BIDEN led in March to include $1.5 billion in the emergency supplemental. Fort Carson soldiers told me how invaluable these MRAPs are, and this funding will see to it that we get more of those vehicles into the field as quickly as possible.

Mr. President, I see the majority leader on the floor, and I would be happy to yield to him, if he so chooses.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, if the distinguished leader will yield for a minute, I want to thank our colleague. I listened to his presentation and thank him for his reflections about the committee's work under the leadership of Senator LEVIN and Senator MCCAIN on the underlying bill. Eventually, I presume, we will focus more attention on that, but it is important to the Senator's State.

The State of Colorado is one of the rocks in our overall defense system of this country, and I wish more people knew how important Colorado's citizens are in giving their support to our men and women of the Armed Forces who proudly serve us from that State. I thank the Senator for his contribution.

Mr. SALAZAR. I thank my friend from Virginia.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, before my friend from Virginia leaves, I note that 40 percent of the State of Nevada is restricted military airspace—40 percent of it. It is all controlled by the military.

Mr. WARNER. Amazing.

Mr. REID. We have Nellis Air Force Base which, as you know, is such a great facility for training our fighter pilots. That is for the Air Force. In the northern part of the State, as you know, we have the Naval Air Training Center, which is for the Navy. If you want to be a Navy pilot, you have to go to Fallon to get your Ph.D. The same as if you are an Air Force pilot, you have to go to Nellis to get your training. It takes so much of Nevada's land to fly over to become the Ph.Ds in fighter training.

Mr. WARNER. The citizens of your State have given 100 percent support to these military people all these years. They may miss a little bit of that airspace, but they are proud to have them there.

Mr. REID. I wanted to brag about Nevada a little bit.

You know, the interesting thing, I say to my friend from Virginia, Nellis Air Force Base—when it was started during the Second World War, it was known as the Las Vegas Gunnery School, and then it became Nellis Air Force Base—named after someone from Searchlight, NV, by the way, Bill Nellis—was on the outskirts of Las Vegas. Now it is in the middle of Las Vegas. But the people of Las Vegas support that base. They protect that base. Nobody criticizes an airplane being a little too loud. We love Nellis Air Force Base.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, Nellis Air Force Base is well cared for in the current authorization bill before this body.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Durbin amendment No. 2252 be withdrawn; that the McConnell amendment No. 2241 be agreed to; and that the Cornyn amendment No. 2100 be agreed to; and that the motions to reconsider be laid on the table.

Before there is acceptance or rejection, let me say this, Mr. President. We have read the Cornyn amendment. We believe it should have a 50-vote margin, like all other amendments, but we are even willing to go a step further with this amendment. We will just accept it, and that is what the consent is all about. We accept the Cornyn amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, we, under our leadership of Senator MCCONNELL, have a request for a rollcall vote on the Cornyn language. We would object to a unanimous consent request to agree to the amendment because there is a desire, a strong desire, to have a recorded vote on this important issue; that every Senator express his or her desire on this amendment.

Having said that, we also want to check with the sponsor of the amendment to see if he wanted to make further comments prior to a vote. Again, we are confident we would be prepared to set that vote for a reasonable time tomorrow after we consult with the proponent.

Therefore, I object to the request, and I propose we revisit this in the morning to see if we can find a time certain for a vote on the Cornyn language.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, we would be happy to revisit this in the morning. We agreed to a reasonable time agreement on this and to have an up-or-down vote. We are in favor of that, a recorded vote. We will take a recorded vote or we will take a voice vote—

whatever the sponsor of the legislation and the Republican leadership wants.

I say, however, that there is an effort to delay this matter. It appears very clear that the purpose of the Republican minority is to obstruct what we are trying to do, and that is complete work on this Defense authorization bill, including an up-or-down vote on Levin-Reed. But I appreciate the opportunity to revisit this in the morning, and I look forward to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished leader for his understanding and the representation that we can resolve this issue tomorrow, and I know our leader is anxious to hopefully get through the various procedural matters relating to the underlying authorization bill so that can move forward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I have about 5 more minutes to complete my presentation, and then I know Senator JACK REED has probably about 20 minutes as well to speak on the issue.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, may I be heard briefly. I so apologize to my friend from Colorado for interrupting his speech. He was gracious. I didn't hear him yielding the floor to recognize me. I thought he was finished. I apologize. This is very typical of the Senator from Colorado to think of others before he thinks of himself. I apologize for not recognizing his courtesy.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I thank the majority leader for his statement. Frankly, it was not great interruption. He had major procedural business to bring before the floor of the Senate and I very much understand.

The budget authority for the Air Force is equally robust, putting additional money behind some of our key space and missile defense programs. Many of our communications, intelligence, and missile detection satellites—a large number of which are flown by the 50th Space Wing out of Buckley—are reaching the end of their lifespan. Every day, though, they grow more and more central to troops on the ground.

The bill provides important investments in our space assets, including $126.7 million for the Space-Based Infrared Satellite System to replace outdated missile detection satellites, and another $300 million to improve our space situational awareness, to help address concerns raised as a result of the Chinese antisatellite test earlier this year. Ask the space professionals, as I have at Schriever, Buckley, or Peterson Air Force Base, and they will tell you how much these investments are needed.

Beyond the funding for equipment and facilities in the bill, however, there are several key quality-of-life provisions in this legislation that the Armed Services Committee has brought before us. Supporting our troops, after all, means we support them in the field and we support them at home. We should help them be successful not just as soldiers but as mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, husbands, and wives. Part of our support includes passing the Dignified Treatment for Wounded Warriors Act, which we passed last week. The bill requires the Secretaries of Defense and Veterans Affairs to create a comprehensive policy for servicemembers who are transitioning from the DOD health system to the VA system. As evidenced by Walter Reed, the current system is not up to the standards that any of us would want for our men and women who have served our country so proudly.

I am also pleased that the underlying bill includes a 3½ percent pay raise for our military personnel, it rejects the administration's proposal to raise TRICARE fees, and requires the DOD to develop a plan to address the findings of an internal assessment of the well-being of soldiers and marines in Iraq. These steps are all important for the quality of life and health of the servicemembers of our Armed Forces.

Mr. President, I again thank Chairman LEVIN, Ranking Member MCCAIN, Senator REID, Senator NELSON, and others who have been involved in taking such a large step forward for our Nation's defenses, and which provides so much common ground from which we can work. It is a solid bill. It is a solid bill which I hope will be further strengthened by the time it passes this Chamber.

I want to very briefly speak about four amendments that I have filed. First, I have filed an amendment with Senator ALEXANDER to implement the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, and I look forward to the debate on that amendment in more detail later this week. We need to find common ground on how we move forward with the United States policy in Iraq.

Second, Senator MCCONNELL, Senator ALLARD, Senator BUNNING, and I have filed an amendment, amendment No. 2061, to set 2017 as a hard deadline for chemical weapons destruction and to increase funding for the weapons destruction programs at Pueblo, CO, and in Bluegrass, KY. Our amendment adds $44 million for MilCon, military construction, funding at these sites.

Third, amendment No. 2110; that will help the Department of Defense protect military installations against encroaching development. My amendment builds on recently released DOD and RAND Corporation reports and pushes the Department to allocate additional resources, provide additional staff, and more aggressively implement the authorities Congress provided to confront the encroachment challenges at many of our bases. Fort Carson, in my State of Colorado, is a prime example of how an effective DOD encroachment program can make sure the military training at the facility is not compromised by development. At other places and other bases in my State—Buckley Air Force Base, Schriever, and Peterson—the Air Force and we in the Congress have a lot more to do to make sure we don't compromise the military training mission of those facilities.

Finally, Senator SESSIONS and I have filed an amendment to provide better support for the Paralympic programs that serve our servicemembers and veterans. My amendment will allow the Office of Special Events at the Department of Defense to provide transportation, logistical support or funding for the Paralympic Military Program and for certain national and international Paralympic competitions. The Paralympic program is invaluable to wounded warriors who are recovering from injuries, and DOD should be allowed to assist with the program when it benefits our servicemembers and veterans.

Again, I thank the leadership of the Armed Services Committee and all its members for bringing forward a bill that is truly a very solid, excellent bill.

I thank my colleague, Senator REED, for his indulgence in letting me precede him.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, might I ask the distinguished assistant Democratic leader, I believe that business for today is concluded with respect to consents from the other side. Am I not correct on that? We will have the benefit of the remarks of the distinguished Senator REED, and then he will wrap up, including two resolutions which we have on this side; am I correct in that?

Mr. DURBIN. I would say to the Senator from Virginia, I am not aware of any other business to come before the Senate.

Mr. WARNER. Is that the understanding?

Mr. REED. That is my understanding. I have no knowledge of any.

Mr. WARNER. I am told by the floor staff there will be no request for consents tonight.

Mr. DURBIN. That is correct.

Mr. WARNER. I appreciate the assurances of the assistant leader.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today we are facing a critical juncture regarding our operations in Iraq. We can continue with a policy that is straining our military, putting excruciating strain on our military and their families, which is diminishing our standing in the international community and which is rapidly losing the support of the American public—in sum, a policy that cannot be sustained—or we can change, we can make a transition of this mission to focus on objectives that are feasible, to begin a reduction in our forces which will relieve the stress on our military and their families, to initiate complementary and comprehensive diplomatic, political, and economic efforts to engage Iraq's neighbors and the rest of the world in bringing a degree of stability to that country.

I believe it is time for such a change. That is why I have joined many of my colleagues, particularly Senator LEVIN, to propose an amendment to do that. This amendment would first call for a beginning of a reduction of American military forces 120 days after the passage of the legislation. It would give the President the flexibility to pick the precise moment and the precise number of forces and to develop a timetable for their departure. Then it would call for the transition to specific missions by next spring, and those missions would include counterterrorism operations, since we can never give up in our attempts to preemptively attack and destroy terrorist cells—not just in Iraq but in, unfortunately, many other parts of the world.

Second, it would allow the American forces to continue to train Iraqi security forces.

Third, it would clearly state we will protect our forces wherever they are, particularly in Iraq.

It also talks about a very comprehensive diplomatic effort. One of the dramatic failings of this administration has been a one-dimensional policy—military force alone, in most cases unilateral military force. That one-dimensional policy defies strategy, it defies the operational techniques of counterinsurgency, and effectively, I think, has led us, in large part, to Iraq today where we are in a very difficult situation.

As all of our commanders have said persistently over the course of this entire conflict: Military operations alone will not lead to success. They will buy time, they might provide some political space, but they will not lead to success. They are merely a complement and a prelude to the economic, to the political, to the nonmilitary forces that are essential to prevail in a counterinsurgency, stabilize a country, and to ultimately prevail in the type of operation we are witnessing in Iraq.

I believe the President had an opportunity last January to chart a new course. The American people spoke very clearly in the November elections. They wanted change. The Iraqi Study Group, a combination of some of the most gifted minds on both sides of the aisle with respect to foreign policy, gave a framework that talked about and hoped for a redeployment of American forces and significant engagement in diplomatic activities. All of this was at the hands of the President. He essentially said, no, we are going to do a lot more of the same—or a little more of the same. I think at that point, frankly, the American people understood the President wasn't listening or, if he was, it was not getting through.

As a result, I think they began to become very much disenchanted with the course of action of this administration. I don't have to tell anyone in this Chamber or across the globe that this is a decisive turning point in their demands that we act, that this Senate and the House of Representatives take significant action. We are trying to respond to that legitimate concern of the American people by the Levin-Reed amendment that we have proposed.

The President said the goals for the surge were to support Iraqi efforts to quell sectarian violence, ensure territorial integrity and counter Iranian and Syrian activity, encourage strong democratic institutions, and foster the conditions for Iraqi national reconciliation.

The heart of it, as he suggested and others have, was to give the Iraqi leaders the ability to make tough political decisions which were essential to their future and to our continued engagement in Iraq.

Principally among them was to jump start the reconciliation process, bring the Sunni community into government and the civic life of Iraq, to pass legislation to fairly distribute the proceeds of oil revenue, the major source of revenue in that country, and to take other steps—including provincial elections. None of that has been effectively accomplished.

So if the premise of the surge was to create tactical momentum for political progress, some tactical momentum may be there but very little, if any, political progress. That, I believe, is the reality.

These goals, this effort was difficult for an extra 30,000 troops to accomplish. But it was made much more difficult because of a series of fundamental operational mistakes and strategic flaws that this administration has been engaged in since the beginning of their operations in Iraq. We know that soon after we arrived in Baghdad, after a very successful conventional attack, there were insufficient forces to occupy the country and chaos broke out. The Coalition Provisional Authority, the CPA, embarked on a debaathification program that denied employment and livelihood and, in a sense, hope to thousands of individuals—teachers, bureaucrats—who had been part of the prior regime, mostly because it was the only way they could hold their jobs, and left, particularly the Sunni community, in a situation where they questioned whether there was a place for them in the new, emerging government.

The CPA disestablished the Army; 500,000 individuals with training suddenly found themselves without a future and very quickly many of them found themselves in the insurgency, for many reasons. The Government, the administration, failed to garner support from regional powers to help.

Then the administration embarked on a series of elections. These elections demonstrated the procedure of democracy. But what they failed to grasp, the administration particularly, is that elections alone are insufficient unless there is a governmental capacity to translate those elections into an effective government that serves the needs of its citizens. So we have demonstrations of thousands of Iraqis, hundreds of thousands, millions going to the polls. But what happened is they didn't elect a functioning government. They became even more frustrated when they recognized that the Government in Baghdad today doesn't work for them.

All of this was summed up, I think very accurately, by former Secretary of Defense William Perry, on January 25, before the Armed Services Committee, where he stated:

> We may never know whether our goal of achieving a democratic stable government in Iraq was in fact feasible, since the administration's attempts to do so were so burdened with strategic errors.

So we start now in a real strategic deficit. Unfortunately, I think the President continues in that vein. The President announced the surge in January: 30,000, roughly, additional forces. It took them many months finally to get in place. The administration claims that since June 15 they have been in place. This was not a surge in the classic military sense of overwhelming force applied rapidly. It was a slow, gradual escalation of a limited force because our force structure limits what we could do. From the very beginning, the ability of this force, deployed in a slow manner, to decisively influence the action on the ground was highly questionable.

I had the opportunity a few days ago to go to Iraq. Many of my colleagues have gone. I was able to travel not only into Baghdad but to get into the countryside to visit forward-operating bases, patrol bases, company-sized bases that are the new disposition of our forces.

First, let me say, as always, I was impressed with the extraordinary professionalism and commitment of the soldiers and marines, the sailors and the airmen who serve us so well. They are doing a superb job. But my conclusion, after spending these 2 brief days in the field, was their tactical momentum, changing the nature of the battlefield, has not, as I said, translated into the political progress needed to truly bring security and stability to Iraq.

And then something else too, the nonrebuttable fact that I see constantly; that is, this surge will come to an end later next spring, not because we have succeeded, not because we have achieved our objectives, but simply because we cannot continue to deploy 160,000 troops in that country. That is a function of our limited forces. Unless the President is prepared to adopt Draconian personnel policies, not 14- to 15-month tours but 18- to 20-month tours; unless he wants to continue to rely upon significant stop-loss, where individuals who are able to leave the service are prevented from doing so; unless he is prepared to do those things, then by next spring the surge ends.

So I think it is appropriate, if we are seeing a situation where just months from now we are going to lower our forces, that we should start thinking

right now of how we do it in a way which will enhance the security of the United States, which will represent to the American people a new direction which they are clamoring for, and which can be sustained, not only in terms of material and personnel but in terms of the support of the American people.

In my opportunity to visit Iraq, I had a chance to sit down with General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker. They have suggested that they consciously recognize the limitations of our overall infrastructure. They also indicated that they were ready, probably sooner than September, to make a declaration of their advice to the President. I do not think we should wait, either. I think this debate is timely, the legislation is timely, and we should move forward.

Now, we received additional information just a few days ago in the nature of the interim report with respect to the status of the benchmarks. There is an appearance that the military situation in terms of the reliability of Iraqi Army units is encouraging to a degree. But there is still a great deal of work to do with the police force, which is a major component of any type of stable society.

In addition, I think if you drill down below the superficial, there is still the nagging question of the reliability, the political reliability, the professional reliability, of these forces, particularly their leadership. That is something which I think is still in great doubt.

But if you look at most of the political area, there is a string of unsatisfactory grades. The President's report found unsatisfactory progress of enacting and implementing legislation on debaathification reform. Essentially, what we are seeing is a huge conflict between the Sunni and Shia communities, and this conflict is not being abated by the wise action of the Government, a Shia government, to allow Sunnis fuller participation in the civic life and the political life of Iraq.

We are seeing unsatisfactory progress on enacting and implementing major legislation to ensure equitable hydrocarbon resources, distribution of oil and petroleum proceeds. We are seeing unsatisfactory progress on establishing a provincial election law, establishing provincial council authority, and setting a date for provincial elections.

One of the problems that has been nagging in the election process for the last several years in Iraq is that the Sunni community did not participate in significant elections, and therefore they are not adequately represented in certain areas. So, as a result, they haven't got this sense of participation of ownership that is so necessary. Until we have provincial elections, this will continue and further provide excuses, if not real reasons, for Sunnis not to participate fully and not to cooperate fully with the Government and with our forces in the field.

The report also talked about unsatisfactory progress toward providing Iraqi commanders with all authorities to make tactical and operational decisions in consultation with U.S. commanders without political intervention, to include the authority to pursue all extremists, including Sunni insurgents and Shia militias. Here is that very-difficult-to-measure factor about the subjective quality of these commanders and leaders—whether they can operate without political interference or whether they are wittingly or unwittingly extensions of the political party.

Just today, if you saw the New York Times, there was an interesting article about how our American forces in Anbar Province were making progress with Sunni tribes, previously our enemies, our opponents, who now were rallying, not necessarily because they agree with us but because they recognize how ruthless and how much al-Qaida is targeting them in going after them. Now, that is progress we should recognize.

But what is disconcerting is the report that the regular Iraqi brigade in that region, primarily Shia, is actually trying to interfere, even in some cases suggest an attack on those Sunnis tribespeople because they see this as a force that will threaten them as they go forward—another example of this Sunni-Shia divide, which is a very difficult political chasm to try to bridge in a short period of time, and that is what we face today in many parts of Iraq.

We also saw unsatisfactory progress in ensuring the Iraqi security forces are providing evenhanded enforcement of the law and unsatisfactory progress as far as limiting militia control of local security. It is a very difficult situation in many respects.

Now, military operations—our military operations are critically important, but here is another reality that I think escapes so many people. Ultimately, only the Iraqis can provide a solution to these political problems, to these sectarian divides. We can suggest what they should do, but unless they do it, these divides will continue to paralyze this country and continue to undermine our efforts to help them stabilize their own country.

I don't think, given the fundamental nature of those issues, that the next 6 weeks until September 15 will make a profound difference. It has been suggested by many commentators that the ability of the Iraqi Government to function—even participate over the next several weeks is limited. So for those people, my colleagues, who call: Wait for September 15, I don't believe or hope that they are suggesting that those profound political problems will be somehow miraculously cured in the next 6 weeks.

As I said before, the inescapable fact, to me, is that by next April, we won't be able to generate 160,000, that somehow our military, sooner rather than later, will have to declare that there is a new strategy that rests not on the surge but on a much smaller force or at least a smaller force, and that force has to deal with these problems or has to deal in a way which the American people will support their continued presence in Iraq. That signal is today for a change in policy, not in September, not next spring, but today.

Now, I alluded to the lack of public support. Some would suggest, well, that is not important. You know, tough leaders have been in situations where the public did not support them. Well, the reality that I learned a long time ago, serving in the military, going to West Point, is that public support is a critical and necessary element of any national security strategy; you can only go so far and so long without it.

We are reaching a point where the American public is clearly declaring that they are deeply concerned about what is going on, deeply distrustful of the President's policy, and my fear, frankly, is unless we take prudent action today, unless the President takes prudent action, that their tolerance for any significant engagement might erode completely by next spring, leaving us with fewer options then than we have today.

A July 6 through 8 Gallup poll found 62 percent of Americans felt the United States made a mistake in sending troops to Iraq. A July 11, 2007, Newsweek poll found that 68 percent of Americans disapproved of the way President Bush was handling the situation in Iraq. This is significant because I suggest it undercuts the necessary ingredient of public support for any major military strategic policy. As the President continues to be intransigent and as many of our colleagues give him the luxury of that intransigence, I fear that the American public becomes increasingly disheartened, increasingly desperate, and increasingly unwilling to listen to policies that will provide for a phased and orderly transition of our mission in Iraq.

We also understand the huge cost of this war. We have appropriated $450 billion. As many of my colleagues point out, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that we are spending about $10 billion a month. That, too, is very difficult to sustain because most of this is being financed, if not all of it, through deficit spending, which means we are passing on to the next generation of Americans a huge bill.

But, also, these are real opportunity costs. How are we going to reestablish, in a very narrow vein, our military, in terms of the personnel, their equipment, when the effort is essentially completed one way or the other? How are we going to provide for the next generation of military equipment, the next generation of military tactics and techniques and support personnel if our budget is in such disarray as it is now? I am not even beginning to comment on the huge costs that are unmet in this society in terms of health care, in terms of education, in terms of those forces and those ingredients of national

power, broad national power that are so essential.

As I said earlier, these operations are posing an excruciating stress and strain on military forces. The high operational tempo is really taking its toll on the troops and on their families. Since 2002, 1.4 million troops have served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Nearly every nondeployed combat brigade in the Active-Duty Army has reported that they are not ready to complete their assigned war mission. These are the troops who have come back from Iraq, from Afghanistan. They are not ready to perform their mission.

We all can remember—I can, at least—Governor Bush talking up before a large crowd in his election campaign and criticizing the Clinton administration because two divisions, as he said, were not—if they were asked to report, they would say: Not ready for duty, sir, to the President. That pales in comparison to the lack of readiness we see today in our military forces. Nearly 9 out of every 10 Army National Guard forces that are not in Iraq or Afghanistan have less than half of the equipment needed to do their job. Their job now is to provide support for Governors in disasters, in problems that are related to their home States.

As I said again and again, military planners do not see how we can sustain 160,000 troops beyond next April. We also recognize that our policies of go-it-alone, our policies of virtually unilateral action are increasingly alienating opinion throughout the world. Once again, to accomplish anything significant, to rally diplomatic forces, to rally all of the forces throughout the world to help us achieve our end, you have to start on the basis of at least understanding and support. We have seen that deteriorate.

We have seen also the situation where, because of our concentration in Iraq, al-Qaida now is resurgent. That is the conclusion of the National Intelligence Estimate that was talked about in the press just last week. We are seeing a situation where Iran is increasing its strategic power. One major factor is the fact that we are tied down with 160,000 troops in Iraq. We are tied down in a way in which many of the individuals in the Iraqi Government whom we depend upon to do and take the actions where it is essential to our success have close personal and political ties to the Iranians. They talk to them on a weekly basis. They take certain directions from them. We are in a situation where our position in Iraq—unwittingly, perhaps—has strengthened the Iranians. We cannot effectively talk about another major military operation when we are having a very difficult time supplying and supporting this operation.

We have effectively taken out two of their traditional opponents in the region, and most difficult and dangerous opponent, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein in Iraq. They now have strategic space. They are using it. They are using it to encourage Hezbollah and Hamas. They are using it to try to achieve nuclear fuel cycles and, on many days we all feel, perhaps, even a nuclear weapon. So what we have seen also is that as these developments take place, the world's opinion is rapidly turning against us.

We are seeing disturbing events in Pakistan and elsewhere where there is a concentration of al-Qaida leadership. I, like so many of my colleagues, was most disturbed a few weeks ago when American news broadcasters were showing films of a graduation ceremony of hundreds of individuals somewhere in Pakistan who were leaving to go off and pursue their jihadist terrorist activities around the world. That is a frightening but real situation.

As a result, Senator LEVIN and I have worked with our colleagues and have proposed an amendment that responds to these different issues and different threats and also the reality of the situation at home and in Iraq. I am pleased we are supported in our efforts by so many, including our colleagues, Senators HAGEL, SMITH, and Senator SNOWE. This is a bipartisan amendment. It recognizes what the American people are demanding, a change in direction, and what the status on the ground and the status of the military require also, a change in direction. It calls for protecting U.S. and coalition forces, continuing our fight against terrorism, and training Iraqi security forces to step up and discharge their responsibilities. It calls for a beginning of a phased reduction of forces, 120 days after enactment of the legislation. It also calls upon us to begin to take up the issue of real proactive, complimentary diplomatic, and political action that is so necessary to stability in the operation.

One of the factors the President talked about last January, and was alluded to by the Secretary of State and others, was the civilian surge to match the military surge—a surge in advisers, technicians, those people who can help the Iraqis organize their political processes at the city level, the provincial level, and their economic processes. That is not taking place as rapidly as necessary. We are at a critical moment, a moment not to delay but to take appropriate action, a moment to change the direction in Iraq, not simply to wait and wait and wait until events dictate we have to draw down forces. I hope we can prevail our colleagues to support our efforts. I will have more to say. I believe many of my colleagues will have much more to say tomorrow.

I urge passage of the Levin-Reed amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BILL MOYERS' EULOGY FOR LADY BIRD JOHNSON

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we should all be so fortunate as to live a worthy life and at the moment of our passing have a person with the talent of Bill Moyers memorialize our time on Earth. On Saturday, Bill Moyers, the PBS journalist who served as special assistant to President Lyndon Johnson from 1963 to 1978, delivered a eulogy at Lady Bird Johnson's funeral service Saturday. He read from a text which I will now have printed in the RECORD.

I ask unanimous consent that the eulogy be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From statesman.com, July 15, 2007]

BILL MOYERS'S EULOGY FOR LADY BIRD JOHNSON

Bill Moyers, the PBS journalist who served as special assistant to President Lyndon Johnson from 1963 to 1967, delivered a eulogy at Lady Bird Johnson's funeral service Saturday. He read from this text:

It is unthinkable to me that Lady Bird is gone.

She was so much a part of the landscape, so much a part of our lives and our times, so much a part of our country for so long that I began to imagine her with us always. Now, although the fields of purple, orange, and blue will long evoke her gifts to us, that vibrant presence has departed, and we are left to mourn our loss of her even as we celebrate her life.

Some people arriving earlier today were asked, ''Are you sitting with the family?'' I looked around at this throng and said to myself, ''Everyone here is sitting with the family. That's how she would treat us.'' All of us.

When I arrived in Washington in 1954, to work in the LBJ mailroom between my sophomore and junior years, I didn't know a single person in town—not even the Johnsons, whom I only met that first week. She soon recognized the weekends were especially lonesome for me, and she called one day to ask me over for Sunday brunch.

I had never even heard of Sunday brunch, must less been to one; for all I knew, it was an Episcopalian sacrament. When I arrived at 30th Place the family was there—the little girls, Lady Bird and himself. But so were Richard Russell and Sam Rayburn and J. Edgar Hoover—didn't look like Episcopal priests to me. They were sitting around the smallish room reading the newspaper—except for LBJ, who was on the phone. If this is their idea of a sacrament, I thought, I'll just stay a Baptist. But Mrs. Johnson knew something about the bachelors she had invited there, including the kid fresh up from her native East Texas. On a Sunday morning they needed a family, and she had offered us communion at her table. In a way, it was a sacrament.

It was also very good politics. She told me something that summer that would make a difference in my life. She was shy, and in the presence of powerful men, she usually kept her counsel. Sensing that I was shy, too, and aware I had no experience to enforce any opinions, she said: Don't worry. If you are unsure of what to say, just ask questions, and I promise you that when they leave, they will think you were the smartest one in the

room, just for listening to them. Word will get around, she said.

She knew the ways of the world, and how they could be made to work for you, even when you didn't fully understand what was going on. She told me once, years later, that she didn't even understand everything about the man she married—nor did she want to, she said, as long as he needed her.

Oh, he needed her, alright. You know the famous incident. Once, trying to locate her in a crowded room, he growled aloud: ''Where's Lady Bird?'' And she replied: ''Right behind you, darling, where I've always been.''

''Whoever loves, believes the impossible,'' Elizabeth Browning wrote. Lady Bird truly loved this man she often found impossible. ''I'm no more bewildered by Lyndon than he is bewildered by himself,'' she once told me.

Like everyone he loved, she often found herself in the path of his Vesuvian eruptions. During the campaign of 1960 I slept in the bed in their basement when we returned from the road for sessions of the Senate. She knew I was lonesome for Judith and our six-month-old son who were back in Texas. She would often come down the two flights of stairs to ask if I was doing alright. One night the Senator and I got home even later than usual. And he brought with him an unresolved dispute from the Senate cloakroom. At midnight I could still hear him upstairs, carrying on as if he were about to purge the Democratic caucus. Pretty soon I heard her footsteps on the stairs and I called out: ''Mrs. Johnson, you don't need to check up on me. I'm alright.'' And she called back, ''Well, I was coming down to tell you I'm alright, too.''

She seemed to grow calmer as the world around her became more furious.

Thunderstorms struck in her life so often, you had to wonder why the Gods on Olympus kept testing her.

She lost her mother in an accident when she was five. She was two cars behind JFK in Dallas. She was in the White House when Martin Luther King was shot and Washington burned. She grieved for the family of Robert Kennedy, and for the lives lost in Vietnam.

Early in the White House, a well-meaning editor up from Texas said, ''You poor thing, having to follow Jackie Kennedy.'' Mrs. Johnson's mouth dropped open, in amazed disbelief. And she said, ''Oh, no, don't pity for me. Weep for Mrs. Kennedy. She lost her husband. I still have my Lyndon.''

She aimed for the consolation and comfort of others. It was not only her talent at negotiating the civil war waged in his nature. It was not just the way she remained unconscripted by the factions into which family, friends, and advisers inevitably divide around a powerful figure. She kept open all the roads to reconciliation.

Like her beloved flowers in the field, she was a woman of many hues. A strong manager, a canny investor, a shrewd judge of people, friend and foe—and she never confused the two. Deliberate in coming to judgment, she was sure in conclusion.

But let me speak especially of the one quality that most captured my admiration and affection, her courage.

It is the fall of 1960. We're in Dallas, where neither Kennedy nor Johnson are local heroes. We start across the street from the Adolphus to the Baker Hotel. The reactionary congressman from Dallas has organized a demonstration of women—pretty women, in costumes of red, white, and blue, waving little American flags above their cowboy hats. At first I take them to be cheerleaders having a good time. But suddenly they are an angry mob, snarling, salivating, spitting.

A roar—a primal terrifying roar swells around us—my first experience with collective hate roused to a fever pitch. I'm right behind the Johnsons. She's taken his arm and as she turns left and right, nodding to the mob, I can see she is smiling. And I see in the eyes of some of those women a confusion—what I take to be the realization that this is them at their most uncivil, confronting a woman who is the triumph of civility. So help me, her very demeanor creates a small zone of grace in the midst of that tumultuous throng. And they move back a little, and again a little, Mrs. Johnson continuing to nod and smile, until we're inside the Baker and upstairs in the suite.

Now LBJ is smiling—he knows that Texas was up for grabs until this moment, and the backlash will decide it for us. But Mrs. Johnson has pulled back the curtains and is looking down that street as the mob disperses. She has seen a dark and disturbing omen. Still holding the curtain back, as if she were peering into the future, she says, ''Things will never be the same again.''

Now it is 1964. The disinherited descendants of slavery, still denied their rights as citizens after a century of segregation, have resolved to claim for themselves the American promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. President Johnson has thrown the full power of his office to their side, and he has just signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964—the greatest single sword of justice raised for equality since the Emancipation Proclamation. A few weeks later, both Johnsons plunge into his campaign for election in his own right. He has more or less given up on the South, after that legislation, but she will not. These were her people, here were her roots. And she is not ready to sever them. So she sets out on a whistle stop journey of nearly seventeen hundred miles through the heart of her past. She is on her own now—campaigning independently—across the Mason-Dixon line down the buckle of the Bible Belt all the way down to New Orleans. I cannot all these years later do justice to what she faced: The boos, the jeers, the hecklers, the crude signs and cruder gestures, the insults and the threats. This is the land still ruled by Jim Crow and John Birch, who controls the law with the cross and club to enforce it. 1964, and bathroom signs still read: ''White Ladies'' and Colored Women.''

In Richmond, she is greeted with signs that read: ''Fly away, Lady Bird.'' In Charleston, ''Blackbird Go Home.'' Children planted in front rows hold up signs: ''Johnson is a Nigger Lover.'' In Savannah they curse her daughter. The air has become so menacing we run a separate engine fifteen minutes ahead of her in case of a bomb; she later said, ''People were concerned for me, but the engineer in the train ahead of us was in far greater danger.'' Rumors spread of snipers, and in the Panhandle of Florida the threats are so ominous the FBI orders a yard-by-yard sweep of a seven-mile bridge that her train would cross.

She never flinches. Up to forty times a day from the platform of the caboose she will speak, sometimes raising a single white-gloved hand to punctuate her words—always the lady. When the insults grew so raucous in South Carolina, she tells the crowd the ugly words were coming ''not from the good people of South Carolina but from the state of confusion.'' In Columbia she answers hecklers with what one observer called ''a maternal bark.'' And she says, ''This is a country of many viewpoints. I respect your right to express your own. Now is my turn to express mine.''

An advance man called me back at the White House from the pay phone at a local train depot. He was choking back the tears. ''As long as I live,'' he said, in a voice breaking with emotion, ''I will thank God I was here today, so that I can tell my children the difference courage makes.''

Yes, she planted flowers, and wanted and worked for highways and parks and vistas that opened us to the technicolor splendors of our world. Walk this weekend among the paths and trails and flowers and see the beauty she loved. But as you do, remember—she also loved democracy, and saw a beauty in it—rough though the ground may be, hard and stony, as tangled and as threatened with blight as nature itself. And remember that this shy little girl from Karnack, Texas—with eyes as wistful as cypress and manners as soft as the whispering pine—grew up to show us how to cultivate the beauty in democracy: The voice raised against the mob. . . the courage to overcome fear with convictions as true as steel.

Claudia Alta Taylor—Lady Bird Johnson—served the beauty in nature and the beauty in us—and right down to the end of her long and bountiful life, she inspired us to serve them, too.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, those of us who were fortunate enough to know Mr. Moyers understand what an extraordinary person he is. I hope those who read the remarks he made about Lady Bird Johnson will come to appreciate so much more the contributions she made in her life. She was a gracious and caring person. Bill Moyers' eulogy reminds us she was also a person of exceptional courage.

I join America in extending condolences to Lady Bird Johnson's family, to the family of our former colleague, Senator Charles and Lynda Robb, and to all those who mourn her passing, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Mr. President, first let me associate myself with the comments of Senator DURBIN about Lady Bird Johnson. I had the privilege and pleasure for many years of knowing a dear friend of their family, my dear friend, Warrie

Price and her family. She was there in Austin for the services.

Also, I had the privilege of serving with Senator Chuck Robb and knowing Lynda. I thank the Senator for recognizing those comments by Bill Moyers. When I spoke to my friend, Warrie Price, she said she had never heard anything as moving and as evocative and as fitting as the tribute by Bill Moyers.

I thank the Senator for including that in the RECORD for the American people to consider.

INDEPENDENCE DAY IN CAPE VERDE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, today with my colleagues in the Senate, I celebrate the anniversary of Cape Verde's independence on behalf of all America. This small African country of 400,000 deserves our recognition, particularly as it one of democracy's few success stories in the African continent.

The existence of Cape Verde's islands was first acknowledged by the Romans. But it was not until 1456 that the uninhabited islands were rediscovered by the Portuguese under the command

of Henry the Navigator. Six years later, Cape Verde was inhabited and incorporated as a colony of the Portuguese Empire. Its prosperity during the height of European colonialism was so great as to be the object of looting pirates, such as the infamous Sir Francis Drake. However, because of recurring droughts and the decline of the slave trade near the end of the 18th century, many Cape Verdeans emigrated from the islands to New England, many becoming productive members of America's whaling commerce.

In the 20th century, Cape Verde was affected by growing nationalism, fomented by disastrous economic circumstances during the Second World War. The tiny nation was subsequently suppressed by the authoritarian Portuguese regime. But in 1974 the Carnation Revolution in Portugal not only brought about the world's third wave of democracy but also meant independence for Cape Verde. On July 5, 1975, Cape Verde received its independence from Portugal.

Cape Verde's road to full democracy has been gradual, but nevertheless Cape Verde can now boast a prolific and fair government that received a perfect score in the Freedom House ratings for both political rights and civil liberties, the only African country with such an honor. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to join me in wishing the 350,000 Cape Verdean-Americans a happy Independence Day this Fifth of July.

VISIT OF POLISH PRESIDENT LECH KACZYNSKI

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise to welcome Polish President Lech Kaczynski to Washington. Recognizing the rich history of cooperation between our two countries, I am happy to say, Witam Serdecznie w Washingtonie, Welcome to Washington.

The Polish President's visit reminds us that for the last 200 years America and Poland have been linked in the struggle for freedom. Today there is a strong legacy of sacrifice between the two nations—sacrifice for the cause of American and Polish freedom alike.

As early as the Revolutionary War, Polish patriots like Casimir Pulaski and Tadeusz Kosciuszko fought alongside American patriots—from Germantown to Saratoga—to help win our country's independence.

During World War I, Ignacy Paderewski, an unparalleled musician, helped lead the fight for a free and independent Poland. He became Prime Minister after the war, only to be forced into exile by the Nazi Occupation. After he died in exile in the United States, America gave this great friend of freedom a place alongside our honored dead in Arlington National Cemetery. There he would rest, in the words of President Franklin Roosevelt, ''until Poland would be free.''

It was a moving sight when, in 1992, President George H. W. Bush escorted Paderewski's ashes home to Poland. No one will forget seeing thousands of Poles lining the streets over the miles from the airport to the city center, waiting to see the horse drawn carriage.

It was the world's good fortune that a Pole infused with this same dedication to freedom and the dignity of all people was elected Pope at such a critical time. Polish Americans were thrilled at the election of Karol Wojtyla as Pope, a man who kept the faith when faith was forbidden.

At the same time, American Polonia's dedication to freedom in their native Poland was vital in ensuring that Soviet totalitarianism would not succeed. Millions of personal packages were sent to friends and family back home, and each package was a message of hope in dark days like—the imposition of martial law in 1981—of the Soviet Union.

The razing of the Iron Curtain provided opportunities to renew the linkage between Poland and America. Two centuries after the deaths of Pulaski and Kosciuszko, Poland and America became formal allies in NATO, institutionalizing the faith in freedom our countries have shared for centuries.

Since joining NATO in 1997, Poland has become one of America's most important strategic partners, dedicating troops and resources to our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

We now have an opportunity to build on this long and deep relationship. Here is how we can:

Renew the unity of purpose of the Transatlantic Relationship. The Bush administration's policy of splitting Europe into ''old'' and ''new'' was not just wrong, it was counterproductive. Poland should not have to choose between its vital interest in closer integration with Europe and its alliance with the United States. America must repair its relationship with Europe as a whole, so that Poland and our other Central European allies are never put in that position again.

Finish building a Europe whole and free. Poland has been a steadfast champion of liberty in the countries to its east. America and Poland should stand together to help Ukraine build a strong and stable democracy, and to help the people of Belarus regain their human rights. We also share an interest in working with Russia to meet common security threats and to encourage Russia's integration into Western institutions. But we should also embrace, not abandon, those in Russia working to preserve their hard won liberty, and draw clear lines against Russia's intimidation of its neighbors. Mr. President, 21st century Europe cannot be divided into 19th century spheres of influence.

Meet global challenges together. Not long ago, we looked to Poland as a country that needed American help in its own efforts to be free and secure; now we look to Poland as a critical partner in building a safer, freer world. We should work with Poland to secure more European troops, with stronger rules of engagement, to stabilize Afghanistan. And we should work together to send an unmistakable signal to Iran that its insistence in pursuing a nuclear weapons program is a profound mistake.

Energize the alliance to confront new challenges. From Poland to the United States, we are facing a new kind of threat in the form of energy insecurity and climate change. The North Atlantic community has always joined forces to confront and defeat new challenges, and we should be doing the same now by, among other things, sharing best practices on energy conservation, inviting India and China to join the International Energy Agency, and dedicating our significant resources to establishing a global cap and trade on greenhouse gas pollution.

Prudently but decisively prepare for emerging threats. The Bush administration has been developing plans to deploy interceptors and radar systems in Poland and the Czech Republic as part of a missile defense system designed to protect against the potential threat of Iranian nuclear armed missiles. If we can responsibly deploy missile defenses that would protect us and our allies we should—but only when the system works. We need to make sure any missile defense system would be effective before deployment. The Bush administration has in the past exaggerated missile defense capabilities and rushed deployments for political purposes. The Bush administration has also done a poor job of consulting its NATO allies about the deployment of a missile defense system that has major implications for all of them. We must not allow this issue to divide ''new Europe'' and ''old Europe,'' as the Bush administration tried to do over Iraq.

Invite Poland to join the Visa Waiver Program. We should work to include countries like Poland that are members of both the EU and NATO into the Visa Waiver Program. Today's visa regime reflects neither the current strategic relationship nor the close historic bonds between our peoples, and is out of date.

These are important steps and I look forward to working with my colleagues to implement them.

It is wonderful to welcome the Polish President at a time in which America and Poland share the same freedom. Our two nations share a common legacy and destiny, and I am honored to welcome President Kaczynski to Washington.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2608. An act to amend section 402 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to provide,

in fiscal years 2008 through 2010, extensions of supplemental security income for refugees, asylees, and certain other humanitarian immigrants, and to amend the Internal Revenue Code to collect unemployment compensation debts resulting from fraud.

H.R. 2669. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 601 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

H.R. 2900. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs and for medical devices, to enhance the postmarket authorities of the Food and Drug Administration with respect to the safety of drugs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2956. An act to require the Secretary of Defense to commence the reduction of the number of United States Armed Forces in Iraq to a limited presence by April 1, 2008, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House agrees to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 556) to ensure national security while promoting foreign investment and the creation and maintenance of jobs, to reform the process by which such investments are examined for any effect they may have on national security, to establish the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to section 201(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431 note), amended by section 681(b) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Year 2003 (22 U.S.C. 2651 note), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker reappoints the following members on the part of the House of Representatives to the Commission on International Religious Freedom: Ms. Felice Gaer of Paramus, New Jersey, for a 2–year term ending May 14, 2009, to succeed herself, and Ms. Nina Shea of Washington, D.C., for a 2–year term ending May 14, 2009, to succeed herself upon the recommendation of the Minority Leader.

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, clause 10 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Speaker appoints the following Members of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group, in addition to Mr. CHANDLER of Kentucky, Chairman, appointed on March 30, 2007: Mr. WU of Oregon, Vice Chairman, Mr. POMEROY of North Dakota, Mr. CLYBURN of South Carolina, Mr. ETHERIDGE of North Carolina, Mr. DAVIS of California, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. PETRI of Wisconsin, Mr. BOOZMAN of Arkansas, Mr. BOUSTANY of Louisiana, Mr. CRENSHAW of Florida, and Mr. WILSON of South Carolina.

At 2:16 p.m., a message from the House, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 1851. An act to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 4:55 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

S. 1701. An act to provide for the extension of transitional medical assistance (TMA) and the abstinence education program through the end of fiscal year 2007, and for other purposes.

H.R. 556. An act to ensure national security while promoting foreign investment and the creation and maintenance of jobs, to reform the process by which such investments are examined for any effect they may have on national security, to establish the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, and for other purposes.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 1851. An act to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 2608. An act to amend section 402 of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to provide, in fiscal years 2008 through 2010, extensions of supplemental security income for refugees, asylees, and certain other humanitarian immigrants, and to amend the Internal Revenue Code to collect unemployment compensation debts resulting from fraud; to the Committee on Finance.

H.R. 2956. An act to require the Secretary of Defense to commence the reduction of the number of United States Armed Forces in Iraq to a limited presence by April 1, 2008, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2669. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 601 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2008.

H.R. 2900. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to revise and extend the user-fee programs for prescription drugs and for medical devices, to enhance the postmarket authorities of the Food and Drug Administration with respect to the safety of drugs, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC–2563. A communication from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Dairy Product Mandatory Reporting'' (RIN0581-AC66) received on July 12, 2007; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC–2564. A communication from the Deputy Secretary of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the evolution of improvised explosive device threats; to the Committee on Appropriations.

EC–2565. A communication from the Chairman, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the profitability of the credit card operations of depository institutions; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC–2566. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Alachlor, Chlorothalonil, Metribuzin; Denial of Objections'' (FRL No. 8135-3) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2567. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Minnesota'' (FRL No. 8439-7) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2568. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Minnesota'' (FRL No. 8439-8) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2569. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment, Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Indiana; Redesignation of the Clark and Floyd Counties 8-hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment'' (FRL No. 8440-2) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2570. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment, Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Indiana; Redesignation of LaPorte County to Attainment for Ozone'' (FRL No. 8440-4) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2571. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Determination of Attainment, Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans and Designation of Areas for Air Quality Planning Purposes; Indiana; Redesignation of the South Bend-Elkhart 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area to Attainment'' (FRL No. 8440-3) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2572. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Public Hearings and Submission of Plans'' (FRL No. 8439-6) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC–2573. A communication from the Chief of the Trade and Commercial Regulations Branch, Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Extension of Import Restrictions Imposed on Pre-Classical and Classical Archaeological Objects and Byzantine Period Ecclesiastical and Ritual Ethnological Material From Cyprus'' (RIN1505-AB80) received on July 12, 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2574. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Final Regulations and Removal of Temporary Regulations Under Section 3402(f)'' ((RIN1545-BE20)(TD 9337)) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2575. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Guidance Under Subpart F Relating to Partnerships'' ((RIN1545-BE34)(TD 9326)) received on July 13, 2007; to the Committee on Finance.

EC–2576. A communication from the Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Advance Electronic Presentation of Cargo Information for Truck Carriers Required to be Transmitted Through ACE Truck Manifest at Ports in the States of Maine and Minnesota'' (CBP Dec. 07-53) received on July 12, 2007; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2577. A communication from the Chief Privacy Officer, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled ''2007 Data Mining Report: DHS Privacy Office Response to House Report 109-699''; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC–2578. A communication from the Attorney General, transmitting, a report relative to the implementation of a new national security oversight and compliance effort; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC–2579. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversion Control, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled ''Import and Production Quotas for Certain List I Chemicals'' (RIN1117-AB08) received on July 5, 2007; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. BIDEN, from the Committee on Foreign Relations, without amendment:

S. 392. A bill to ensure payment of United States assessments for United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 2005 through 2008 time period (Rept. No. 110-130).

By Mrs. MURRAY, from the Committee on Appropriations, without amendment:

S. 1789. An original bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 110-131).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mrs. MURRAY:

S. 1789. An original bill making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Appropriations; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. OBAMA:

S. 1790. A bill to make grants to carry out activities to prevent the incidence of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections among teens in racial or ethnic minority or immigrant communities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. CRAIG):

S. 1791. A bill to amend the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 to reauthorize, and increase funding for, the biodiesel fuel education program; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Mr. OBAMA, and Mrs. CLINTON):

S. 1792. A bill to amend the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act to improve such Act; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Ms. MIKULSKI:

S. Res. 273. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States Postal Service should issue a semipostal stamp to support medical research relating to Alzheimer's disease; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. COLEMAN):

S. Con. Res. 41. A concurrent resolution commending the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 41

At the request of Mr. BAUCUS, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 41, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives to improve America's research competitiveness, and for other purposes.

S. 65

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WEBB) was added as a cosponsor of S. 65, a bill to modify the age-60 standard for certain pilots and for other purposes.

S. 211

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 211, a bill to facilitate nationwide availability of 2–1–1 telephone service for information and referral on human services, volunteer services, and for other purposes.

S. 435

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 435, a bill to amend title 49, United States Code, to preserve the essential air service program.

S. 594

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 594, a bill to limit the use, sale, and transfer of cluster munitions.

S. 597

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 597, a bill to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 2 years.

S. 609

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, his name was added as a cosponsor of S. 609, a bill to amend section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 to provide that funds received as universal service contributions and the universal service support programs established pursuant to that section are not subject to certain provisions of title 31, United States Code, commonly known as the Antideficiency Act.

S. 771

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 771, a bill to amend the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to improve the nutrition and health of schoolchildren by updating the definition of ''food of minimal nutritional value'' to conform to current nutrition science and to protect the Federal investment in the national school lunch and breakfast programs.

S. 774

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 774, a bill to amend the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 to permit States to determine State residency for higher education purposes and to authorize the cancellation of removal and adjustment of status of certain alien students who are long-term United States residents and who entered the United States as children, and for other purposes.

S. 814

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 814, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction of attorney-advanced expenses and court costs in contingency fee cases.

S. 881

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from Oklahoma (Mr. INHOFE) were added as cosponsors of S. 881, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend

and modify the railroad track maintenance credit.

S. 1107

At the request of Mr. SMITH, the names of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1107, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to reduce cost-sharing under part D of such title for certain non-institutionalized full-benefit dual eligible individuals.

S. 1183

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1183, a bill to enhance and further research into paralysis and to improve rehabilitation and the quality of life for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 1257

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1257, a bill to provide the District of Columbia a voting seat and the State of Utah an additional seat in the House of Representatives.

S. 1261

At the request of Ms. CANTWELL, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1261, a bill to amend title 10 and 38, United States Code, to repeal the 10-year limit on use of Montgomery GI Bill educational assistance benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 1354

At the request of Ms. MIKULSKI, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1354, a bill to amend the definition of a law enforcement officer under subchapter III of chapter 83 and chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code, respectively, to ensure the inclusion of certain positions.

S. 1356

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1356, a bill to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to establish industrial bank holding company regulation, and for other purposes.

S. 1359

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1359, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to enhance public and health professional awareness and understanding of lupus and to strengthen the Nation's research efforts to identify the causes and cure of lupus.

S. 1450

At the request of Mr. KOHL, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1450, a bill to authorize appropriations for the Housing Assistance Council.

S. 1457

At the request of Mr. HARKIN, the names of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) were added as cosponsors of S. 1457, a bill to provide for the protection of mail delivery on certain postal routes, and for other purposes.

S. 1571

At the request of Mr. BINGAMAN, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. PRYOR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1571, a bill to reform the essential air service program, and for other purposes.

S. 1592

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1592, a bill to reauthorize the Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program.

S. 1708

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1708, a bill to provide for the expansion of Federal efforts concerning the prevention, education, treatment, and research activities related to Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, including the establishment of a Tick-Borne Diseases Advisory Committee.

S. 1718

At the request of Mr. BROWN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BAUCUS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1718, a bill to amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to provide for reimbursement to servicemembers of tuition for programs of education interrupted by military service, for deferment of students loans and reduced interest rates for servicemembers during periods of military service, and for other purposes.

S. 1744

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1744, a bill to prohibit the application of certain restrictive eligibility requirements to foreign nongovernmental organizations with respect to the provision of assistance under part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

S. 1747

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1747, a bill to regulate the judicial use of presidential signing statements in the interpretation of Act of Congress.

S. 1784

At the request of Mr. KERRY, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. LIEBERMAN) were added as cosponsors of S. 1784, a bill to amend the Small Business Act to improve programs for veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 1785

At the request of Mr. NELSON of Florida, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1785, a bill to amend the Clean Air Act to establish deadlines by which the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall issue a decision on whether to grant certain waivers of preemption under that Act.

S. RES. 236

At the request of Mr. BAYH, the name of the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 236, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of the National Anthem Project, which has worked to restore America's voice by re-teaching Americans to sing the national anthem.

S. RES. 269

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 269, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee should recommend to the Postmaster General that a commemorative postage stamp be issued in honor of former United States Representative Barbara Jordan.

AMENDMENT NO. 2021

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2021 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2022

At the request of Mr. LEAHY, the names of the Senator from Wisconsin (Mr. FEINGOLD) and the Senator from Colorado (Mr. SALAZAR) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2022 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. SPECTER, the name of the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2022 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, supra.

AMENDMENT NO. 2033

At the request of Mr. DODD, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2033 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2046

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin

(Mr. FEINGOLD) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2046 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2060

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mrs. HUTCHISON) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2060 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2067

At the request of Mr. KENNEDY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUYE) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2067 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2072

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2072 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2074

At the request of Mrs. LINCOLN, the name of the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2074 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2086

At the request of Mr. SANDERS, his name was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2086 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2108

At the request of Mrs. CLINTON, the name of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2108 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2125

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the names of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL) and the Senator from California (Mrs. BOXER) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2125 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2188

At the request of Mr. LIEBERMAN, the names of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) and the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) were added as cosponsors of amendment No. 2188 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2191

At the request of Mr. LAUTENBERG, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2191 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 2205

At the request of Mrs. MCCASKILL, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) was added as a cosponsor of amendment No. 2205 intended to be proposed to H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 273—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE SHOULD ISSUE A SEMIPOSTAL STAMP TO SUPPORT MEDICAL RESEARCH RELATING TO ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Ms. MIKULSKI submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

S. RES. 273

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States Postal Service should, in accordance with section 416 of title 39, United States Code—

(1) issue a semipostal stamp to support medical research relating to Alzheimer's disease; and

(2) transfer to the National Institutes of Health for that purpose any amounts becoming available from the sale of such stamp.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 41—COMMENDING THE 1ST BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM/34TH INFANTRY DIVISION OF THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD UPON ITS COMPLETION OF THE LONGEST CONTINUOUS DEPLOYMENT OF ANY UNITED STATES MILITARY UNIT DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself and Mr. COLEMAN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 41

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard, known as the Red Bull Division, is headquartered in Bloomington, Minnesota, and is made up of some 3,700 hard-working and courageous Minnesotans and some 1,300 more soldiers from other Midwestern States;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team has a long history of service to the United States, beginning with the Civil War;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team was most recently mobilized in September 2005 and departed for Iraq in March 2006;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team recently completed the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas during its deployment, the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2,400,000 convoy miles, and discovered 462 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) prior to detonation;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team processed over 1,500,000 million vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without any insurgent penetrations;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team captured over 400 suspected insurgents;

Whereas more than 1,400 members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team reenlisted during deployment and 21 members became United States citizens during deployment;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team helped start 2 Iraqi newspapers that provide news to the local population and publish stories on reconstruction progress;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 137 reconstruction projects;

Whereas the deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team in Iraq was extended by 125 days in January 2007;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team and its members are now returning to the United States to loving families and a grateful Nation;

Whereas the families of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team have waited patiently for their loved ones to return and endured many hardships during this lengthy deployment;

Whereas the employers of the soldiers and family members of the 1st Brigade/34th Infantry Division have displayed patriotism over profit by keeping positions saved for the

returning soldiers and supporting the families during the difficult days of this long deployment, and these employers of the soldiers and their families are great corporate citizens through their support of our armed forces and their family members;

Whereas communities throughout the Midwest are now integral participants in the Minnesota National Guard's extensive Beyond the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program that will help members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team return to normal life; and

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division has performed admirably and courageously, putting service to country over personal interests and gaining the gratitude and respect of Minnesotans, Midwesterners, and all Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team and their exemplary service to the United States; and

(3) directs the Secretary of the Senate to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard for appropriate display.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 2210. Mr. BINGAMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2211. Mr. AKAKA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2212. Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2213. Mr. BIDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2214. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2215. Mr. LOTT (for himself and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2216. Mr. COLEMAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2217. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2218. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2219. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2220. Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2221. Mr. KERRY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2222. Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2223. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2224. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2225. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2226. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2227. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table .

SA 2228. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2229. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2230. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2045 submitted by Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2231. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2232. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2233. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2234. Mr. SALAZAR (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2235. Mr. REID (for himself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2236. Mr. REID (for himself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2237. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. BAYH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY , Mrs. BOXER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mr. DODD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2238. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2143 submitted by Mr. CORNYN and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2239. Mr. SPECTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2240. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2241. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1585 , supra.

SA 2242. Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2243. Mr. AKAKA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2244. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2245. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2055 submitted by Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2246. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2247. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2055 submitted by Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2248. Mr. DORGAN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2249. Mr. BINGAMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2250. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2251. Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CASEY, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2252. Mr. DURBIN proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2241 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 1585, supra.

SA 2253. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2254. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2255. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2256. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2257. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mrs. DOLE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2258. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2259. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him

to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2260. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2261. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2262. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. BUNNING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2263. Mr. PRYOR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2264. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2265. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2266. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2267. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2268. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BIDEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. REED, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 2269. Mr. REED (for Mrs. CLINTON) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 27, supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Purple Heart Recognition Day''.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 2210. Mr. BINGAMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XXXI, add the following:

SEC. 3126. MODIFICATION OF REPORTING REQUIREMENT.

Section 3111 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109–163; 119 Stat. 3539) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by striking ''March 1, 2007'' and inserting ''March 1 of 2007, 2009, 2011, and 2013'';

(2) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(3) by inserting after subsection (b) the following new subsection (c):

''(c) FORM.—The report required by subsection (b) to be submitted not later than March 1 of 2009, 2011, or 2013, shall be submitted in classified form, and shall include a detailed unclassified summary.''; and

(4) in subsection (e), as redesignated, by striking ''(c)'' and inserting ''(d)''.

SA 2211. Mr. AKAKA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title III, add the following:

SEC. 314. REPORT ON CONTROL OF THE BROWN TREE SNAKE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*), an invasive species, is found in significant numbers on military installations and in other areas on Guam, and constitutes a serious threat to the ecology of Guam.

(2) If introduced into Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the continental United States, the brown tree snake would pose an immediate and serious economic and ecological threat.

(3) The most probable vector for the introduction of the brown tree snake into Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the continental United States is the movement from Guam of military aircraft, personnel, and cargo, including the household goods of military personnel.

(4) It is probable that the movement of military aircraft, personnel, and cargo, including the household goods of military personnel, from Guam to Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the continental United States will increase significantly coincident with the increase in the number of military units and personnel stationed on Guam,

(5) Current policies, programs, procedures, and dedicated resources of the Department of Defense and of other departments and agencies of the United States may not be sufficient to adequately address the increasing threat of the introduction of the brown tree snake from Guam into Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the continental United States.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives a report on the following:

(1) The actions currently being taken (including the resources being made available) by the Department of Defense to control, and to develop new or existing techniques to control, the brown tree snake on Guam and to ensure that the brown tree snake is not introduced into Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island, or the continental United States as a result of the movement from Guam of military aircraft, personnel, and cargo, including the household goods of military personnel.

(2) Current plans for enhanced future actions, policies, and procedures and increased levels of resources in order to ensure that the projected increase of military personnel stationed on Guam does not increase the threat of introduction of the brown tree snake from Guam into Hawaii, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the continental United States.

SA 2212. Mr. LEVIN (for himself and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1070. PROTECTION OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

(a) PROTECTION FOR DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP.—The Secretary of Defense, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary and in accordance with guidelines approved by the Secretary and the Attorney General, may authorize qualified members of the Armed Forces and qualified civilian employees of the Department of Defense to provide physical protection and security within the United States to the following persons who, by nature of their positions, require continuous security and protection:

(1) Secretary of Defense.

(2) Deputy Secretary of Defense.

(3) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(4) Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

(5) Secretaries of the military departments.

(6) Chiefs of the Services.

(7) Commanders of combatant commands.

(b) PROTECTION FOR ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE.—The Secretary of Defense, under regulations prescribed by the Secretary and in accordance with guidelines approved by the Secretary and the Attorney General, may authorize qualified members of the Armed Forces and qualified civilian employees of the Department of Defense to provide physical protection and security within the United States to individuals other than individuals described in paragraphs (1) through (7) of subsection (a) if the Secretary determines that such protection is necessary because—

(A) there is an imminent and credible threat to the safety of the individual for whom protection is to be provided; or

(B) compelling operational considerations make such protection essential to the conduct of official Department of Defense business.

(2) PERSONNEL.—Individuals authorized to receive physical protection and security under this subsection include the following:

(A) Any official, military member, or employee of the Department of Defense, including such a former or retired official who faces serious and credible threats arising from duties performed while employed by the Department.

(B) Any distinguished foreign visitor to the United States who is conducting official business with the Department of Defense.

(C) Any member of the immediate family of a person authorized to receive physical protection and security under this section.

(3) LIMITATION ON DELEGATION.—The authority of the Secretary of Defense to authorize the provision of physical protection and security under this subsection may be delegated only to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

(4) REQUIREMENT FOR WRITTEN DETERMINATION.—A determination of the Secretary of Defense to provide physical protection and security under this subsection shall be in writing, shall be based on a threat assessment by an appropriate law enforcement, security or intelligence organization, and shall include the name and title of the officer, employee, or other individual affected, the reason for such determination, and the duration of the authorized protection and security for such officer, employee, or individual.

(5) DURATION OF PROTECTION.—

(A) INITIAL PERIOD OF PROTECTION.—After making a written determination under paragraph (4), the Secretary of Defense may provide protection and security to an individual under this subsection for an initial period of not more than 90 calendar days.

(B) SUBSEQUENT PERIOD.—If, at the end of the 90-day period that protection and security is provided to an individual under subsection (A), the Secretary determines that a condition described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (1) continues to exist with respect to the individual, the Secretary may extend the period that such protection and security is provided for additional 60-day periods. The Secretary shall review such a determination at the end of each 60-day period to determine whether to continue to provide such protection and security.

(C) REQUIREMENT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS.—Protection and security provided under subparagraph (B) shall be provided in accordance with the regulations and guidelines referred to in paragraph (1).

(6) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report of each determination made under paragraph (4) to provide protection and security to an individual and of each determination under paragraph (5)(B) to extend such protection and security, together with the justification for such determination, not later than 30 days after the date on which the determination is made.

(B) FORM OF REPORT.—A report submitted under subparagraph (A) may be made in classified form.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEES.—The term ''congressional defense committees'' means the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives.

(2) QUALIFIED MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND QUALIFIED CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—The terms ''qualified members of the Armed Forces and qualified civilian employees of the Department of Defense'' refer collectively to members or employees who are assigned to investigative, law enforcement, or security duties of any of the following:

(A) The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command.

(B) The Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

(C) The U.S. Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

(D) The Defense Criminal Investigative Service.

(E) The Pentagon Force Protection Agency.

(d) CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) NO ADDITIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OR ARREST AUTHORITY.—Other than the authority to provide security and protection under this section, nothing in this section may be construed to bestow any additional law enforcement or arrest authority upon the qualified members of the Armed Forces and qualified civilian employees of the Department of Defense.

(2) AUTHORITIES OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to preclude or limit, in any way, the express or implied powers of the Secretary of Defense or other Department of Defense officials, or the duties and authorities of the Secretary of State, the Director of the United States Secret Service, the Director of the United States Marshals Service, or any other Federal law enforcement agency.

SA 2213. Mr. BIDEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1008. REPORT ON FUNDING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR HEALTH CARE FOR ANY FISCAL YEAR IN WHICH THE ARMED FORCES ARE ENGAGED IN A MAJOR MILITARY CONFLICT.

If the Armed Forces are involved in a major military conflict when the President submits to Congress the budget for a fiscal year under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, and either the aggregate amount included in that budget for the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care for such fiscal year is less than the aggregate amount provided by Congress for the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs for health care for such preceding fiscal year, and, in the case of the Department of Defense, the total allocation from the Defense Health Program to any military department is less than the total such allocation in the preceding fiscal year, the President shall submit to Congress a report on—

(1) the reasons for the determination that inclusion of a lesser aggregate amount is in the national interest; and

(2) the anticipated effects of the inclusion of such lesser aggregate amount on the access to and delivery of medical and support services to members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and their family members.

SA 2214. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title I, add the following:

SEC. 143. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON RAPID FIELDING OF ASSOCIATE INTERMODAL PLATFORM SYSTEM AND OTHER INNOVATIVE LOGISTICS SYSTEMS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Use of the Associate Intermodal Platform (AIP) pallet system, developed two years ago by the United States Transportation Command, could save the United States as much as $1,300,000 for every 1,000 pallets deployed.

(2) The benefits of the usage of the Associate Intermodal Platform pallet system include the following:

(A) The Associate Intermodal Platform pallet system can be used to transport cargo alone within current International Standard of Organization containers and thereby provide further savings in costs of transportation of cargo.

(B) The Associate Intermodal Platform pallet system has successfully passed rigorous testing by the United States Transportation Command at various military installations in the United States, at a Navy testing lab, and in the field in Iraq, Kuwait, and Antarctica.

(C) By all accounts the Associate Intermodal Platform pallet system has performed well beyond expectations and is ready for immediate production and deployment.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Department of Defense should—

(1) rapidly field innovative logistic systems such as the Associated Intermodal Platform pallet system; and

(2) seek in the budget of the President for fiscal year 2009 funds to fully procure innovative logistic systems such as the Associate Intermodal Platform pallet system.

SA 2215. Mr. LOTT (for himself and Mr. LIEBERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following:

SEC. 214. 10,000-POUND BALLISTIC AERIAL DELIVERY AND SOFT-LANDING SYSTEM.

(a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, ARMY.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(1) for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Army is hereby increased by $3,000,000.

(b) AVAILABILITY.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(1) for research, development, test, and evaluation for Army, as increased by subsection (a) $3,000,000 may be available for Advanced Warfighter Technologies (PE #0603001A) for the 10,000-pound Ballistic Aerial Delivery and Soft-Landing System.

(c) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(3) for research, development, test, and evaluation for the Air Force is hereby reduced by $3,000,000, with the amount of the reduction to be allocated to amounts available for Aerospace Technology Development and Demonstration (PE #0603211F) for 15 Flight Vehicle Test Integration.

SA 2216. Mr. COLEMAN (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title V, add the following:

SEC. 536. SATISFACTION OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS BY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE ON ACTIVE DUTY.

(a) ADDITIONAL PERIOD BEFORE RE-TRAINING OF NURSE AIDES IS REQUIRED UNDER THE MEDICARE AND MEDICAID PROGRAMS.—For purposes of subparagraph (D) of sections 1819(b)(5) and 1919(b)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395i–3(b)(5), 1396r(b)(5)), if, since an individual's most recent completion of a training and competency evaluation program described in subparagraph (A) of such

sections, the individual was ordered to active duty in the Armed Forces for a period of at least 12 months, and the individual completes such active duty service during the period beginning on July 1, 2007, and ending on September 30, 2008, the 24-consecutive-month period described subparagraph (D) of such sections with respect to the individual shall begin on the date on which the individual completes such active duty service. The preceding sentence shall not apply to an individual who had already reached such 24-consecutive-month period on the date on which such individual was ordered to such active duty service.

(b) REPORT ON RELIEF FROM REQUIREMENTS FOR NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE ON LONG-TERM ACTIVE DUTY.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report setting forth recommendations for such legislative action as the Secretary considers appropriate (including amendments to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq.)) to provide for the exemption or tolling of professional or other licensure or certification requirements for the conduct or practice of a profession, trade, or occupation with respect to members of the National Guard and Reserve who are on active duty in the Armed Forces for an extended period of time.

SA 2217. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title IX, add the following:

SEC. 937. PHYSICIANS AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS COMPARABILITY ALLOWANCES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 81 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

"§ 1599. Physicians and health care professionals comparability allowances

''(a) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE ALLOWANCES.—(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and in order to recruit and retain highly qualified Department of Defense physicians and Department of Defense health care professionals, the Secretary of Defense may, subject to the provisions of this section and such regulations as the President or his designee may prescribe, enter into a service agreement with a Department of Defense physician or a Department of Defense health care professional which provides for such physician or health care professional to complete a specified period of service in the Department of Defense in return for an allowance for the duration of such agreement in an amount to be determined by the Secretary and specified in the agreement, but not to exceed—

''(A) in the case of a Department of Defense physician—

''(i) $25,000 per annum if, at the time the agreement is entered into, the Department of Defense physician has served as a Department of Defense physician for 24 months or less; or

''(ii) $40,000 per annum if the Department of Defense physician has served as a Department of Defense physician for more than 24 months; and

''(B) in the case of a Department of Defense health care professional—

''(i) an amount up to $5,000 per annum if, at the time the agreement is entered into, the Department of Defense health care professional has served as a Department of Defense health care professional for less than 10 years;

''(ii) an amount up to $10,000 per annum if, at the time the agreement is entered into, the Department of Defense health care professional has served as a Department of Defense health care professional for at least 10 years but less than 18 years; or

''(iii) an amount up to $15,000 per annum if, at the time the agreement is entered into, the Department of Defense health care professional has served as a Department of Defense health care professional for 18 years or more.

''(2)(A) For the purpose of determining length of service as a Department of Defense physician, service as a physician under section 4104 or 4114 of title 38 or active service as a medical officer in the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service under Title II of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 202 et seq.) shall be deemed service as a Department of Defense physician.

''(B) For the purpose of determining length of service as a Department of Defense health care professional, service as a nonphysician health care provider, psychologist, or social worker while serving as an officer described under section 302c(d)(1) of title 37 shall be deemed service as a Department of Defense health care professional.

''(b) CERTAIN PHYSICIANS AND PROFESSIONALS INELIGIBLE.—An allowance may not be paid under this section to any physician or health care professional who—

''(1) is employed on less than a half-time or intermittent basis;

''(2) occupies an internship or residency training position; or

''(3) is fulfilling a scholarship obligation.

''(c) COVERED CATEGORIES OF POSITIONS.—The Secretary of Defense shall, under such regulations, criteria, and conditions as the President or his designee may prescribe, determine categories of positions applicable to physicians and health care professionals within the Department of Defense with respect to which there is a significant recruitment and retention problem for purposes of this section. Only physicians and health care professionals serving in such positions shall be eligible for an allowance under this section. The amounts of each such allowance shall be determined by the Secretary, subject to such regulations, criteria, and conditions as the President or his designee may prescribe, and shall be the minimum amount necessary to deal with the recruitment and retention problem for each such category of physicians and health care professionals.

''(d) PERIOD OF SERVICE.—Any agreement entered into by a physician or health care professional under this section shall be for a period of one year of service in the Department of Defense unless the physician or health care professional requests an agreement for a longer period of service.

''(e) REPAYMENT.—Unless otherwise provided for in the agreement under subsection (f), an agreement under this section shall provide that the physician or health care professional, in the event that such physician or health care professional voluntarily, or because of misconduct, fails to complete at least one year of service under such agreement, shall be required to refund the total amount received under this section, unless the Secretary of Defense, under such regulations as may be prescribed under this section by the President or his designee, determines that such failure is necessitated by circumstances beyond the control of the physician or health care professional.

''(f) TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT.—Any agreement under this section shall specify, subject to such regulations as the President or his designee may prescribe, the terms under which the Secretary of Defense and the physician or health care professional may elect to terminate such agreement, and the amounts, if any, required to be refunded by the physician or health care professional for each reason for termination.

''(g) CONSTRUCTION WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES.—(1) An allowance paid under this section shall not be considered as basic pay for the purposes of subchapter VI and section 5595 of chapter 55 of title 5, chapter 81 or 87 of title 5, or other benefits related to basic pay.

''(2) Any allowance under this section for a Department of Defense physician or Department of Defense health care professional shall be paid in the same manner and at the same time as the basic pay of the physician or health care professional is paid.

''(h) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than June 30 each year, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a written report on the operation of this section during the preceding year. Each report shall include, with respect to the year covered by such report, information as to—

''(1) the nature and extent of the recruitment or retention problems justifying the use by the Department of Defense of the authority under this section;

''(2) the number of physicians and health care professionals with whom agreements were entered into by the Department of Defense;

''(3) the size of the allowances and the duration of the agreements entered into; and

''(4) the degree to which the recruitment or retention problems referred to in paragraph (1) were alleviated under this section.

''(i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

''(1) The term 'Department of Defense health care professional' means any individual employed by the Department of Defense who is a qualified health care professional employed as a health care professional and paid under any provision of law specified in subparagraphs (A) through (F) of paragraph (2).

''(2) The term 'Department of Defense physician' means any individual employed by the Department of Defense as a physician or dentist who is paid under a provision or provisions of law as follows:

''(A) Section 5332 of title 5, relating to the General Schedule.

''(B) Subchapter VIII of chapter 53 of title 5, relating to the Senior Executive Service.

''(C) Section 5371 of title 5, relating to certain health care positions.

''(D) Section 5376, of title 5, relating to certain senior-level positions.

''(E) Section 5377 of title 5, relating to critical positions.

''(F) Subchapter IX of chapter 53 of title 5, relating to special occupational pay systems.

''(3) The term 'qualified health care professional' means any individual who is—

''(A) a psychologist who meets the Office of Personnel Management Qualification Standards for the Occupational Series of Psychologist as required by the position to be filled;

''(B) a nurse who meets the applicable Office of Personnel Management Qualification Standards for the Occupational Series of Nurse as required by the position to be filled;

''(C) a nurse anesthetist who meets the applicable Office of Personnel Management Qualification Standards for the Occupational Series of Nurse as required by the position to be filled;

''(D) a physician assistant who meets the applicable Office of Personnel Management Qualification Standards for the Occupational Series of Physician Assistant as required by the position to be filled; or

''(E) a social worker who meets the applicable Office of Personnel Management Qualification Standards for the Occupational Series of Social Worker as required by the position to be filled.''.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 81 of such title is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

''1599e. Physicians and health care professionals comparability allowances.''.

SA 2218. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 844, insert the following:

(h) STUDY AND PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No amounts in the Fund may be used until the Secretary of Defense develops a plan for establishing the appropriate size of the acquisition workforce of the Department to accomplish inherently governmental functions.

(2) CONTENT.—The plan developed under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) identify the positions and skills, due to their inherently governmental nature, that should be supplied by Department of Defense personnel versus contractor personnel;

(B) identify the gaps in skills that exist within the current acquisition workforce of the Department;

(C) create a plan for closing such skill gaps;

(D) create a plan for obtaining a proper match between the level of acquisition expertise within each acquisition program office and the level of risk associated with the acquisition program that the program office is expected to manage; and

(E) identify the additional personnel or hiring authorities that may be required on an interim basis, until such time as the Department of Defense has sufficient government personnel to fill the positions designated as inherently governmental.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than October 1, 2008, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the plan developed under paragraph (1).

SA 2219. Mr. CHAMBLISS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

Strike section 872 and insert the following:

SEC. 872. ENHANCED AUTHORITY TO ACQUIRE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES PRODUCED IN IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, AND OTHER DESIGNATED AREAS WITHIN THE CENTCOM AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a product or service to be acquired in support of military operations or stability operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the area of responsibility of the Central Command (CENTCOM AOR), including security, transition, reconstruction, and humanitarian relief activities, for which the Secretary of Defense makes a determination described in subsection (b), the Secretary may conduct a procurement in which—

(1) competition is limited to products or services that are from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR;

(2) procedures other than competitive procedures are used to award a contract to a particular source or sources from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR; or

(3) a preference is provided for products or services that are from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR.

(b) DETERMINATION.—A determination described in this subsection is a determination by the Secretary that—

(1) the product or service concerned is to be used only by the military forces, police, or other security personnel of Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR; or

(2) it is in the national security interest of the United States to limit competition, use procedures other than competitive procedures, or provide a preference as described in subsection (a) because—

(A) such limitation, procedure, or preference is necessary to provide a stable source of jobs in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR; and

(B) such limitation, procedure, or preference will not adversely affect—

(i) military operations or stability operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR; or

(ii) the United States industrial base.

(c) PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND SOURCES FROM IRAQ, AFGHANISTAN, OR OTHER DESIGNATED CONTINGENCY AREA WITHIN THE CENTCOM AOR.—For the purposes of this section:

(1) A product is from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR if it is mined, produced, or manufactured in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR.

(2) A service is from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR if it is performed in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR by citizens or permanent resident aliens of Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR.

(3) A source is from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR if it—

(A) is located in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR; and

(B) offers products or services that are from Iraq, Afghanistan, or other designated contingency area within the CENTCOM AOR.

SA 2220. Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. CHAMBLISS, and Mrs. CLINTON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 604. PAYMENT OF INACTIVE DUTY TRAINING TRAVEL COSTS FOR CERTAIN SELECTED RESERVE MEMBERS.

(a) PAYMENT OF TRAVEL COSTS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 7 of title 37, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 408 the following new section:

''§ 408a. Travel and transportation allowances: inactive duty training

''(a) ALLOWANCE AUTHORIZED.—Under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary concerned may reimburse a member of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve described in subsection (b) for travel expenses for travel to an inactive duty training location to perform inactive duty training.

''(b) ELIGIBLE MEMBERS.—A member of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve described in this subsection is a member who—

''(1) is—

''(A) qualified in a skill designated as critically short by the Secretary concerned;

''(B) assigned to a unit of the Selected Reserve with a critical manpower shortage, or is in a pay grade in the member's reserve component with a critical manpower shortage; or

''(C) assigned to a unit or position that is disestablished or relocated as a result of defense base closure or realignment or another force structure reallocation; and

''(2) commutes a distance from the member's permanent residence to the member's inactive duty training location that is outside the normal commuting distance (as determined under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense) for that commute.

''(c) MAXIMUM AMOUNT.—The maximum amount of reimbursement provided a member under subsection (a) for each round trip to a training location shall be $300.

''(d) TERMINATION.—No reimbursement may be provided under this section for travel that occurs after December 31, 2010.''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 7 of such title is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 408 the following new item:

''408a. Travel and transportation allowances: inactive duty training.''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2007. No reimbursement may be provided under section 408a of title 37, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), for travel costs incurred before October 1, 2007.

SA 2221. Mr. KERRY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 10____. COMMERCIALIZATION PILOT PROGRAM.

Section 9(y) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 638(y)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end the following: ''The authority to create and administer a Commercialization Pilot Program under this subsection may not be construed to eliminate or replace any other

SBIR program that enhances the insertion or transition of SBIR technologies, including any such program in effect on the date of enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006 (Public Law 109-163; 119 Stat. 3136).'';

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (7) and (8), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (4) the following:

''(5) INSERTION INCENTIVES.—For any contract with a value of not less than $100,000,000, the Secretary of Defense and each Secretary of a military department is authorized to—

''(A) establish goals for transitioning Phase III technologies in subcontracting plans;

''(B) change the profit guidelines to increase the incentive for a prime contractor on such a contract to insert SBIR and STTR technology into programs of record or fielded systems; and

''(C) require a prime contractor on such a contract to report the number and dollar amount of contracts entered into by that prime contractor for Phase III SBIR projects.

''(6) GOAL FOR SBIR TECHNOLOGY INSERTION.—The Secretary of Defense and each Secretary of a military department shall—

''(A) set a goal to increase the number of Phase II contracts awarded by that Secretary that lead to technology transition into programs of record or fielded systems;

''(B) use incentives in effect on the date of enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, or create new incentives, to encourage prime contractors to meet the goal under subparagraph (A); and

''(C) submit to the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Small Business of the House of Representatives an annual report regarding the percentage of contracts described in subparagraph (A) awarded by that Secretary.''; and

(4) in paragraph (8), as so redesignated, by striking ''fiscal year 2009'' and inserting ''fiscal year 2012''.

SA 2222. Mrs. CLINTON (for herself and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585 to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XXXI, add the following:

Subtitle D—Nuclear Terrorism Prevention

SEC. 3131. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(1) The term ''Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material'' means the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, signed at New York and Vienna March 3, 1980.

(2) The term ''formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material'' means uranium–235 (contained in uranium enriched to 20 percent or more in the U–235 isotope), uranium–233, or plutonium in any combination in a total quantity of 5,000 grams or more computed by the formula, grams = (grams contained U–235) + 2.5 (grams U–233 + grams plutonium), as set forth in the definitions of ''formula quantity'' and ''strategic special nuclear material'' in section 73.2 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) The term ''Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty'' means the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, done at Washington, London, and Moscow July 1, 1968, and entered into force March 5, 1970 (21 UST 483).

(4) The term ''nuclear weapon'' means any device utilizing atomic energy, exclusive of the means for transporting or propelling the device (where such means is a separable and divisible part of the device), the principal purpose of which is for use as, or for the development of, a weapon, a weapon prototype, or a weapon test device.

SEC. 3132. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The possibility that terrorists may acquire and use a nuclear weapon against the United States is the most horrific threat that our Nation faces.

(2) The September 2006 ''National Strategy for Combating Terrorism'' issued by the White House states, ''Weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorists is one of the gravest threats we face.''

(3) Former Senator and cofounder of the Nuclear Threat Initiative Sam Nunn has stated, ''Stockpiles of loosely guarded nuclear weapons material are scattered around the world, offering inviting targets for theft or sale. We are working on this, but I believe that the threat is outrunning our response.''.

(4) Existing programs intended to secure, monitor, and reduce nuclear stockpiles, redirect nuclear scientists, and interdict nuclear smuggling have made substantial progress, but additional efforts are needed to reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism as much as possible.

(5) Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said that a nuclear terror attack ''would not only cause widespread death and destruction, but would stagger the world economy and thrust tens of millions of people into dire poverty''.

(6) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) reaffirms the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and directs all countries, in accordance with their national procedures, to adopt and enforce effective laws that prohibit any non-state actor from manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, developing, transporting, transferring, or using nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes, and to prohibit attempts to engage in any of the foregoing activities, participate in them as an accomplice, or assist or finance them.

(7) The Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Dr. Mohammed ElBaradei, has said that it is a ''race against time'' to prevent a terrorist attack using a nuclear weapon.

(8) The International Atomic Energy Agency plays a vital role in coordinating efforts to protect nuclear materials and to combat nuclear smuggling.

(9) Legislation sponsored by Senator Richard Lugar, Senator Pete Domenici, and former Senator Sam Nunn has resulted in groundbreaking programs to secure nuclear weapons and materials and to help ensure that such weapons and materials do not fall into the hands of terrorists.

SEC. 3133. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR TERRORISM.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the President should make the prevention of a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States of the highest priority;

(2) the President should accelerate programs, requesting additional funding as appropriate, to prevent nuclear terrorism, including combating nuclear smuggling, securing and accounting for nuclear weapons, and eliminating, removing, or securing and accounting for formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material wherever such quantities may be;

(3) the United States, together with the international community, should take a comprehensive approach to reducing the danger of nuclear terrorism, including by making additional efforts to identify and eliminate terrorist groups that aim to acquire nuclear weapons, to ensure that nuclear weapons worldwide are secure and accounted for and that formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material worldwide are eliminated, removed, or secure and accounted for to a degree sufficient to defeat the threat that terrorists and criminals have shown they can pose, and to increase the ability to find and stop terrorist efforts to manufacture nuclear explosives or to transport nuclear explosives and materials anywhere in the world;

(4) within such a comprehensive approach, a high priority must be placed on ensuring that all nuclear weapons worldwide are secure and accounted for and that all formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material worldwide are eliminated, removed, or secure and accounted for; and

(5) the International Atomic Energy Agency should be funded appropriately to fulfill its role in coordinating international efforts to protect nuclear material and to combat nuclear smuggling.

SEC. 3134. MINIMUM SECURITY STANDARD FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND FORMULA QUANTITIES OF STRATEGIC SPECIAL NUCLEAR MATERIAL.

(a) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to work with the international community to take all possible steps to ensure that all nuclear weapons around the world are secure and accounted for and that all formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material are eliminated, removed, or secure and accounted for to a level sufficient to defeat the threats posed by terrorists and criminals.

(b) INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY STANDARD.—In furtherance of the policy described in subsection (a), and consistent with the requirement for ''appropriate effective'' physical protection contained in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), as well as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the President, in consultation with relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall seek the broadest possible international agreement on a global standard for nuclear security that—

(1) ensures that nuclear weapons and formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material are secure and accounted for to a sufficient level to defeat the threats posed by terrorists and criminals;

(2) takes into account the limitations of equipment and human performance; and

(3) includes steps to provide confidence that the needed measures have in fact been implemented.

(c) INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS.—In furtherance of the policy described in subsection (a), the President, in consultation with relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall—

(1) work with other countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency to assist as appropriate, and if necessary, work to convince, the governments of any and all countries in possession of nuclear weapons or formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material to ensure that security is upgraded to meet the standard described in

subsection (b) as rapidly as possible and in a manner that—

(A) accounts for the nature of the terrorist and criminal threat in each such country; and

(B) ensures that any measures to which the United States and any such country agree are sustained after United States and other international assistance ends;

(2) ensure that United States financial and technical assistance is available as appropriate to countries for which the provision of such assistance would accelerate the implementation of, or improve the effectiveness of, such security upgrades; and

(3) work with the governments of other countries to ensure that effective nuclear security rules, accompanied by effective regulation and enforcement, are put in place to govern all nuclear weapons and formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material around the world.

SEC. 3135. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than September 1 of each year, the President, in consultation with relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall submit to Congress a report on the security of nuclear weapons, formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material, radiological materials, and related equipment worldwide.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A section on the programs for the security and accounting of nuclear weapons and the elimination, removal, and security and accounting of formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material and radiological materials, established under section 3132(b) of the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (50 U.S.C. 2569(b)), which shall include the following:

(A) A survey of the facilities and sites worldwide that contain nuclear weapons or related equipment, formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material, or radiological materials.

(B) A list of such facilities and sites determined to be of the highest priority for security and accounting of nuclear weapons and related equipment, or the elimination, removal, or security and accounting of formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material and radiological materials, taking into account risk of theft from such facilities and sites, and organized by level of priority.

(C) A prioritized diplomatic and technical plan, including measurable milestones, metrics, estimated timetables, and estimated costs of implementation, on the following:

(i) The security and accounting of nuclear weapons and related equipment and the elimination, removal, or security and accounting of formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material and radiological materials at such facilities and sites worldwide.

(ii) Ensuring that security upgrades and accounting reforms implemented at such facilities and sites worldwide using the financial and technical assistance of the United States are effectively sustained after such assistance ends.

(iii) The role that international agencies and the international community have committed to play, together with a plan for securing contributions.

(D) An assessment of the progress made in implementing the plan described in subparagraph (C), including a description of the efforts of foreign governments to secure and account for nuclear weapons and related equipment and to eliminate, remove, or secure and account for formula quantities of strategic special nuclear material and radiological materials.

(2) A section on efforts to establish and implement the international nuclear security standard described in section 3134(b) and related policies.

(c) FORM.—The report may be submitted in classified form but shall include a detailed unclassified summary.

SA 2223. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 236. POLICY ON PROGRAMS IN SPACE TO DEFEND UNITED STATES ASSETS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) United States space-based satellites provide automated reconnaissance and mapping, aid weather prediction, track fleet and troop movements, give accurate positions of United States and enemy forces, and guide missiles and pilotless planes to their targets during military operations.

(2) United States access to space is dependent upon our ability to defend our space assets.

(3) China has an aggressive mission to gain space power, and on January 17, 2007, China successfully conducted an anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons test that successfully destroyed an inactive Chinese weather satellite.

(4) Space-based weapons in the hands of hostile states constitute an asymmetric capability designed to undermine United States strengths.

(5) Space-based assets have the potential to prevent interference with United States satellites.

(b) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to protect its military and civilian satellites and to research all potential means of doing so.

SA 2224. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title III, add the following:

SEC. 325. OPERATION JUMP START.

(a) ADDITIONAL AMOUNT FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE, DEFENSE-WIDE ACTIVITIES.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(5) for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities is hereby increased by $400,000,000.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(5) for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities, as increased by subsection (a), $400,000,000 may be available for Operation Jump Start in order to maintain a significant durational force of the National Guard on the southern land border of the United States to assist the United States Border Patrol in gaining operational control of that border.

(2) SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT.—The amount available under paragraph (1) for the purpose specified in that paragraph is in addition to any other amounts available in this Act for that purpose.

SA 2225. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title II, add the following:

SEC. 236. BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SPACE TESTBED.

Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(4) for research, development, test, and evaluation, Defense-wide activities—

(1) the amount available for the Ballistic Missile Defense Space Testbed (PE#0603895C) is hereby increased by $10,000,000; and

(2) the amount available for Ballistic Missile Defense Technology (PE#0603175C) is hereby decreased by $10,000,000.

SA 2226. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. _____. STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM.

(a) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term ''state sponsor of terrorism'' means any country, the government of which has been determined by the Secretary of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism pursuant to—

(1) section 6(j)(1)(A) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405(j)(1)(A)) (or any successor thereto);

(2) section 40(d) of the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2780(d)); or

(3) section 620A(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371(a)).

(b) SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION DISCLOSURE OF BUSINESS TIES TO STATE SPONSORS OF TERROR.—

(1) REQUIREMENT FOR A SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act and annually thereafter, the Securities and Exchange Commission (in this section referred to as the ''Commission'') shall prepare and submit to Congress a report on business activities carried out with state sponsors of terrorism.

(2) CONTENT.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a list of all persons required to make periodic or other filings pursuant to section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) that disclose in filings with the Commission business activity in or with a country that is a state sponsor of terrorism, or an instrumentality of such a country;

(B) a description of such business activities carried out by each person referred to in subparagraph (A);

(C) the value of such activities carried out by each person referred to in subparagraph (A); and

(D) a description of the disclosure standard in effect at the time at which the content of the report was collected, if it has changed from the time of the first or most recent report submitted pursuant to paragraph (1), and the criteria for persons to register under section 12(g) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78l(g)).

(3) PUBLICATION OF REPORT.—The Commission shall make the report required by this subsection available on its website in an easily accessible and searchable format.

(4) STRENGTHENING SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue regulations to require disclosure by all persons required to make periodic or other filings pursuant to section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78m(a), 78o(d)) of business activity in an amount equal to more than $1,000,000, either directly or through an affiliate, in or with a country that is a state sponsor of terrorism, or an instrumentality of such country.

(c) REPORT ON BUSINESS TIES TO STATE SPONSORS OF TERRORISM.—

(1) REQUIREMENT FOR REPORT.—Not later than 270 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Director of National Intelligence shall submit to Congress a classified report on business activities carried out with state sponsors of terrorism.

(2) DATA.—The Director of National Intelligence shall use all data available from elements of the intelligence community (as that term is defined in section 3 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 401a)), the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, and other appropriate governmental and nongovernmental entities to prepare the report required by paragraph (1).

(3) CONTENT.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) a list of persons, including foreign persons, that carry out business activities in or with a country that is a state sponsor of terrorism, or an instrumentality of such a country;

(B) a description of such business activities carried out by each such person;

(C) the value of such activities carried out by each such person;

(D) an assessment of likely omissions and incompleteness in the report required by paragraph (1);

(E) if necessary, differentiation by the degree of reliability of the data used to prepare the such report;

(F) a description of available options to increase the completeness and reliability of such data;

(G) an assessment of the economic condition of each state sponsor of terrorism; and

(H) an assessment of the effects of implementing various divestiture and sanctions options against each state sponsor of terrorism.

(d) GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS.—

(1) EVALUATION OF DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of delivery of the report of the Director of National Intelligence under subsection (c), and annually thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress a report that compares the report of the Commission submitted under subsection (b) and the report of the Director submitted under subsection (c), to include—

(A) a comparison of included persons and business activities;

(B) measures that evaluate the completeness of each report;

(C) measures that evaluate the reliability of each report; and

(D) an assessment of options to increase the completeness and reliability of such data.

(2) INVESTMENT REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of delivery of the report of the Director of National Intelligence under subsection (c), and annually thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress, a report—

(A) that, in an unclassified section, contains the names of persons described in subsection (b)(2)(A) that are included in each of the major investable financial market indices and the holdings of the Federal Thrift Savings Plan of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (in this paragraph referred to as the ''TSP''), including—

(i) the percentage of each such index and TSP holdings comprised of such persons; and

(ii) the dollar capitalization of each such person;

(B) that, in a classified section, contains the names of persons described in subsection (c)(3)(A) that are included in each of the major investable financial market indices and the holdings of the TSP, including—

(i) the percentage of each such index and TSP holdings comprised of such persons; and

(ii) the dollar capitalization of each such person; and

(C) the unclassified section of which is made available on the website of the Government Accountability Office in an easily accessible and searchable format.

(3) GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of delivery of the report of the Director of National Intelligence under subsection (c), and annually thereafter, the Comptroller General of the United States shall prepare and submit to Congress a report—

(A) that, in an unclassified section, contains the names of the persons described in subsection (b)(2)(A), the nature of the activity, and the value of United States Government active contracting for the procurement of goods or services with any such person;

(B) that, in a classified section, contains the names of the persons described in subsection (c)(3)(A), the nature of the activity, and the value of United States Government active contracting for the procurement of goods or services with any such person; and

(C) the unclassified section of which is made available on the website of the Government Accountability Office in an easily accessible and searchable format.

(e) AUTHORIZATION FOR CERTAIN STATE AND LOCAL DIVESTMENT MEASURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any State, locality, or United States college or university may adopt measures to prohibit any investment of State, local, college, or university assets in the Government of a state sponsor of terror, or in any person with a qualifying business relationship with a state sponsor of terrorism.

(2) APPLICABILITY.—Paragraph (1) shall apply to measures adopted before, on, or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(f) INVESTMENT COMPANY ACT OF 1940.—Section 13 of the Investment Company Act of 1940 (15 U.S.C. 80a-13) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(c) SAFE HARBOR FOR CHANGES IN INVESTMENT POLICIES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of Federal or State law, no person may bring any civil, criminal, or administrative action against any registered investment company or person providing services to such registered investment company (including its investment adviser), or any employee, officer, or director thereof, based solely upon the investment company divesting from, or avoiding investing in, securities issued by persons that are included on the most recent list published under section 3(a)(1) of the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act, as modified under section 3(b) of that Act.

''(2) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term 'person' includes the Federal Government and any State or political subdivision of a State.''.

(g) INCREASED PENALTIES UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY ECONOMIC POWERS ACT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 206. PENALTIES.

''(a) UNLAWFUL ACTS.—It shall be unlawful for a person to violate, attempt to violate, conspire to violate, or cause a violation of any license, order, regulation, or prohibition issued under this title.

''(b) CIVIL PENALTY.—A civil penalty may be imposed on any person who commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) in an amount not to exceed the greater of—

''(1) $250,000; or

''(2) an amount that is twice the amount of the transaction that is the basis of the violation with respect to which the penalty is imposed.

''(c) CRIMINAL PENALTY.—A person who willfully commits, willfully attempts to commit, or willfully conspires to commit, or aids or abets in the commission of, an unlawful act described in subsection (a) shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than $1,000,000, or if a natural person, may be imprisoned for not more than 20 years, or both.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this subsection applies to violations described in section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) with respect to which enforcement action is pending or commenced on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

SA 2227. Mr. KYL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle A of title XII, add the following:

SEC. 1205. LIMITATION ON AVAILABILITY OF FOREIGN MILITARY FINANCING PROGRAM ASSISTANCE FOR EGYPT.

Of the amount appropriated or otherwise made available by any Act making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for fiscal year 2008 for the Foreign Military Financing Program and available for assistance for Egypt, $200,000,000 may not be made available to be obligated or expended until the Secretary of State certifies that the Government of Egypt has taken concrete and measurable steps—

(1) to enact and implement a new judicial authority law that protects the independence of the judiciary;

(2) to review criminal procedures and train police leadership in modern policing to curb police abuses; and

(3) to detect and destroy the smuggling network and smuggling tunnels that lead from Egypt to Gaza.

SA 2228. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In section 1203, strike subsection (a) and insert the following:

(a) AUTHORITY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During fiscal year 2008, from funds made available to the Department of Defense for operation and maintenance for such fiscal year, not to exceed $977,441,000 may be used by the Secretary of Defense in such fiscal year to provide funds—

(A) for the Commanders' Emergency Response Program in Iraq for the purpose of enabling United States military commanders in Iraq to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements within their areas of responsibility by carrying out programs that will immediately assist the Iraqi people; and

(B) for a similar program to assist the people of Afghanistan.

(2) VOLUNTARY RELOCATION IN IRAQ.—The response to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements referred to in paragraph (1)(A) shall include using direct payments, job creation, and housing assistance to facilitate the relocation of Iraqi individuals and families, if, in the judgment of United States military commanders in Iraq—

(A) such individuals and families are affiliated with a sect that comprises no more than half of the population of the neighborhood or community in which they reside;

(B) such individuals and families are likely targets of violence because of their sectarian affiliation;

(C) such individuals and families desire to relocate to a neighborhood or community where their sect comprises a substantial majority of the population; and

(D) the security of a particular neighborhood or community can be improved with the relocation of sectarian minorities.

SA 2229. Mr. BROWNBACK submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. COUNTERTERRORISM ASSISTANCE TO SECURITY FORCES IN THE KURDISTAN REGION.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Turkey, a key ally of the United States and an important fellow member of NATO, faces a terrorist threat from the Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, an organization included on the Department of State's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

(2) Some PKK members now reside in, plan, or launch terrorist operations from northern Iraq.

(3) Iraq, a sovereign nation, is obliged under international law to protect neighboring countries from threats emanating from within its own borders.

(4) The Kurdistan Regional Government, which oversees a three-province, constitutionally-recognized region of Iraq that is largely stable and peaceful, requires additional capacity to eliminate terrorist-related activities, including those of the PKK, that exist within its boundaries.

(5) The Georgia Train and Equip Program, started in 2002—

(A) enhanced the counterterrorism, border security, and intelligence capabilities of the Government of Georgia;

(B) successfully mitigated the growing threat of international terrorism within the borders of Georgia; and

(C) contributed to greater regional stability and made a positive contribution to relations between the Governments of Georgia and Russia.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) peace and stability along the border between Turkey and Iraq is essential for the long-term security of Iraq; and

(2) the Georgia Train and Equip Program provides a model for security assistance necessary to counter terrorist threats in northern Iraq.

(c) ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, shall develop and implement a program, modeled after the Georgia Train and Equip Program, to assist the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government in securing Iraq's border with Turkey and eliminating terrorist safe havens, including by providing assistance—

(1) to secure Iraq's border with Turkey;

(2) to eliminate PKK safe havens in the Kurdistan Region; and

(3) to enhance the intelligence gathering and border security capabilities of the Government of Iraq.

(d) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, shall report to Congress on the progress in developing and implementing the program required under subsection (c).

SA 2230. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2045 submitted by Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. WEBB) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted, insert the following:

SEC. 1215. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Thailand is an important strategic ally and economic partner of the United States.

(2) The United States strongly supports the prompt restoration of democratic rule in Thailand.

(3) While it is in the interest of the United States to have a robust defense relationship with Thailand, it is appropriate that the United States has curtailed certain military-to-military cooperation and assistance programs until democratic rule has been restored in Thailand.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Thailand should continue on the path to restore democratic rule as quickly as possible, and should hold free and fair national elections as soon as possible and no later than December 2007; and

(2) once Thailand has fully reestablished democratic rule, it will be both possible and desirable for the United States to reinstate a full program of military assistance to the Government of Thailand, including programs such as International Military Education and Training (IMET) and Foreign Military Financing (FMF) that were appropriately suspended following the military coup in Thailand in September 2006.

(c) LIMITATION.—No funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act may be obligated or expended to provide direct assistance to the Government of Thailand to initiate new military assistance activities until 15 days after the Secretary of Defense notifies the Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committees on Armed Services and Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives of the intent of the Secretary to carry out such new types of military assistance activities with Thailand.

(d) EXCEPTION.—The limitation in subsection (c) shall not apply with respect to funds as follows:

(1) Amounts authorized to be appropriated for Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid.

(2) Amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated by this Act and available for humanitarian or emergency assistance for other nations.

(e) NEW MILITARY ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ''new military assistance activities'' means military assistance activities that have not been undertaken between the United States and Thailand during fiscal year 2007.

SA 2231. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. 555. ACCESS TO STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION.

Section 503(c) of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following: ''(1)(A) Each local educational agency receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965—

''(i) shall provide to military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to postsecondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students; and

''(ii) shall provide, upon a request made by a military recruiter for military recruiting purposes, access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary school student served by the local educational agency, notwithstanding section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g(a)(5)(B)), unless the parent of

such student has submitted the prior consent request under subparagraph (B).

''(B)(i) The parent of a secondary school student may submit a written request, to the local educational agency, that the student's name, address, and telephone listing not be released for purposes of subparagraph (A) without prior written parental consent. Upon receiving a request, the local educational agency may not release the student's name, address, and telephone listing for such purposes without the prior written consent of the parent.

''(ii) Each local educational agency shall notify parents of the option to make a request described in clause (i).

''(C) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to allow a local educational agency to withhold access to a student's name, address, and telephone listing from a military recruiter or institution of higher education by implementing an opt-in process or any other process other than the written consent request process under subparagraph (B)(i).

''(D) PARENTAL CONSENT.—For purposes of this paragraph, whenever a student has attained eighteen years of age, the permission or consent required of and the rights accorded to the parents of the student shall only be required of and accorded to the student.'';

(2) by striking paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) and inserting the following:

''(2)(A) If a local educational agency denies recruiting access to a military recruiter under this section, the Secretary shall notify—

''(i) the Governor of the State in which the local educational agency is located; and

''(ii) the Secretary of Education.

''(B) Upon receiving a notification under subparagraph (A), the Secretary of Education—

''(i) shall, consistent with the provisions of part D of title IV of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1234c), determine whether the local educational agency is failing to comply substantially with the requirements of this subsection; and

''(ii) upon determining that the local educational agency has failed to comply substantially with such requirements, may impose a penalty or enforce a remedy available for a violation of section 9528(a) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7908(a)) in the same manner as such penalty or remedy would apply to a local educational agency that violated such section.''; and

(3) by redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively.

SA 2232. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1070. REPORT ON FEASIBILITY OF HOUSING A DOMESTIC MILITARY AVIATION NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER AT ELLINGTON FIELD, TEXAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than March 31, 2008, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the feasibility of utilizing existing infrastructure or installing new infrastructure at Ellington Field, Texas, to house a Domestic Military Aviation National Training Center (DMA-NTC) for current and future operational reconnaissance and surveillance missions of the National Guard that support local, State, and Federal law enforcement agencies.

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) examine the current and past requirements of RC-26 aircraft in support of local, State, and Federal law enforcement and determine the number of aircraft required to provide such support for each State that borders Canada, Mexico, or the Gulf of Mexico;

(2) determine the number of military and civilian personnel required to run a RC-26 domestic training center meeting the requirements identified under paragraph (1); and

(3) determine the cost of locating such a training center at Ellington Field, Texas, for the purpose of preempting and responding to security threats and responding to crises.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In preparing the report required under subsection (a), the Secretary of Defense shall consult with the Adjutant General of each State that borders Canada, Mexico, or the Gulf of Mexico.

SA 2233. Mrs. HUTCHISON submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1070. REPORT ON FEASIBILITY OF HOUSING A NATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE CENTER AT KELLY AIR FIELD, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than March 31, 2008, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the feasibility of utilizing existing infrastructure or installing new infrastructure at Kelly Air Field, San Antonio, Texas, to house a National Disaster Response Center for responding to man-made and natural disasters in the United States .

(b) CONTENT.—The report required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A determination of how the National Disaster Response Center would organize and leverage capabilities of the following currently co-located organizations, facilities, and forces located in San Antonio, Texas:

(A) Lackland Air Force Base.

(B) Fort Sam Houston.

(C) Brooke Army Medical Center.

(D) Wilford Hall Medical Center.

(E) Audie Murphy Veterans Administration Medical Center.

(F) 433rd Airlift Wing C-5 Heavy Lift Aircraft.

(G) 149 Fighter Wing and Texas Air National Guard F-16 fighter aircraft.

(H) Army Northern Command.

(I) The National Trauma Institute's three level 1 trauma centers.

(J) Texas Medical Rangers.

(K) San Antonio Metro Health Department.

(L) The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

(M) The Air Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency at Lackland Air Force Base.

(N) The United States Air Force Security Police Training Department at Lackland Air Force Base.

(O) The large manpower pools and blood donor pools from the more than 6,000 trainees at Lackland Air Force Base.

(2) Determine the number of military and civilian personnel required to be mobilized to run the logistics, planning, and maintenance of the National Disaster Response Center during a time of disaster recovery.

(3) Determine the number of military and civilian personnel required to run the logistics, planning, and maintenance of the National Disaster Response Center during a time when no disaster is occurring.

(4) Determine the cost of improving the current infrastructure at Kelly Air Field to meet the needs of displaced victims of a disaster equivalent to that of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita or a natural or man-made disaster of similar scope, including adequate beds, food stores, and decontamination stations to triage radiation or other chemical or biological agent contamination victims.

SA 2234. Mr. SALAZAR (for himself and Mr. SESSIONS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title III, the following:

SEC. 358. AUTHORITY FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR CERTAIN SPORTING EVENTS.

(a) PROVISION OF SUPPORT.—Section 2564 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:

''(4) A sporting event sanctioned by the United States Olympic Committee through the Paralympic Military Program.

''(5) Any national or international paralympic sporting event (other than a sporting event described in paragraphs (1) through (4))—

''(A) that—

''(i) is held in the United States or any of its territories or commonwealths;

''(ii) is governed by the International Paralympic Committee; and

''(iii) is sanctioned by the United States Olympic Committee;

''(B) for which participation exceeds 100 amateur athletes; and

''(C) in which at least 10 percent of the athletes participating in the sporting event are members or former members of the armed forces who are participating in the sporting event based upon an injury or wound incurred in the line of duty in the armed force and veterans who are participating in the sporting event based upon a service-connected disability.''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g) FUNDING FOR SUPPORT OF CERTAIN EVENTS.—(1) Amounts for the provision of support for a sporting event described in paragraph (4) or (5) of subsection (c) shall be derived from the Support for International Sporting Competitions, Defense account established by section 5802 of the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997 (10 U.S.C. 2564 note), notwithstanding any limitation under that section relating to the availability of funds in such account for the provision of support for international sporting competitions.

''(2) The total amount expended for any fiscal year to provide support for sporting

events described in subsection (c)(5) may not exceed $1,000,000.''.

(b) SOURCE OF FUNDS.—Section 5802 of the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997 (10 U.S.C. 2564 note) is amended—

(1) by inserting after ''international sporting competitions'' the following: ''and for support of sporting competitions authorized under section 2564(c)(4) and (5), of title 10, United States Code,''; and

(2) by striking ''45 days'' and inserting ''15 days''.

SA 2235. Mr. REID (for himself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VI, insert the following:

SEC. ____. INCLUSION OF VETERANS WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED AS TOTAL BY REASON OF UNEMPLOYABILITY UNDER TERMINATION OF PHASE-IN OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT OF RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION.

(a) INCLUSION OF VETERANS.—Section 1414(a)(1) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''or a qualified retiree receiving veterans' disability compensation for a disability rated as total (within the meaning of subsection (e)(3)(B))'' after ''rated as 100 percent''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on December 31, 2004.

SA 2236. Mr. REID (for himself and Ms. SNOWE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title VI, insert the following:

SEC. ____. ELIGIBILITY FOR PAYMENT OF BOTH RETIRED PAY AND VETERANS' DISABILITY COMPENSATION FOR CERTAIN MILITARY RETIREES WITH COMPENSABLE SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES.

(a) EXTENSION OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT AUTHORITY TO RETIREES WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED LESS THAN 50 PERCENT.—

(1) REPEAL OF 50 PERCENT REQUIREMENT.—Section 1414 of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking paragraph (2) of subsection (a).

(2) COMPUTATION.—Paragraph (1) of subsection (c) of such section is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(G) For a month for which the retiree receives veterans' disability compensation for a disability rated as 40 percent or less or has a service-connected disability rated as zero percent, $0.''.

(b) REPEAL OF PHASE-IN OF CONCURRENT RECEIPT FOR RETIREES WITH SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITIES RATED AS TOTAL.—Subsection (a)(1) of such section is amended by striking ''except that'' and all that follows and inserting ''except—

''(A) in the case of a qualified retiree receiving veterans' disability compensation for a disability rated as 100 percent, payment of retired pay to such veteran is subject to subsection (c) only during the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on December 31, 2004; and

''(B) in the case of a qualified retiree receiving veterans' disability compensation for a disability rated as total by reason of unemployability, payment of retired pay to such veteran is subject to subsection (c) only during the period beginning on January 1, 2004, and ending on December 31, 2007.''.

(c) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—

(1) The heading for section 1414 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''§ 1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation''.

(2) The item relating to such section in the table of sections at the beginning of chapter 71 of such title is amended to read as follows:

''1414. Members eligible for retired pay who are also eligible for veterans' disability compensation: concurrent payment of retired pay and disability compensation.''.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2008, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SEC. ____. COORDINATION OF SERVICE ELIGIBILITY FOR COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT.

(a) ELIGIBILITY FOR TERA RETIREES.—Subsection (c) of section 1413a of title 10, United States Code, is amended by striking ''entitled to retired pay who—'' and inserting ''who—

''(1) is entitled to retired pay, other than a member retired under chapter 61 of this title with less than 20 years of service creditable under section 1405 of this title and less than 20 years of service computed under section 12732 of this title; and

''(2) has a combat-related disability.''.

(b) AMENDMENTS TO STANDARDIZE SIMILAR PROVISIONS.—

(1) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The heading for paragraph (3) of section 1413a(b) of such title is amended by striking ''RULES'' and inserting ''RULE''.

(2) QUALIFIED RETIREES.—Subsection (a) of section 1414 of such title, as amended by section 2(a), is amended—

(A) by striking ''a member or'' and all that follows through ''retiree')'' and inserting ''a qualified retiree''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

''(2) QUALIFIED RETIREES.—For purposes of this section, a qualified retiree, with respect to any month, is a member or former member of the uniformed services who—

''(A) is entitled to retired pay, other than in the case of a member retired under chapter 61 of this title with less than 20 years of service creditable under section 1405 of this title and less than 20 years of service computed under section 12732 of this title; and

''(B) is also entitled for that month to veterans' disability compensation.''.

(3) DISABILITY RETIREES.—Subsection (b) of section 1414 of such title is amended—

(A) by striking ''SPECIAL RULES'' in the subsection heading and all that follows through ''is subject to'' and inserting ''SPECIAL RULE FOR CHAPTER 61 DISABILITY RETIREES.—In the case of a qualified retiree who is retired under chapter 61 of this title, the retired pay of the member is subject to''; and

(B) by striking paragraph (2).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect on January 1, 2008, and shall apply to payments for months beginning on or after that date.

SA 2237. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KERRY, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. BAYH, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. SALAZAR, and Mr. DODD) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

TITLE XXXIII—DREAM ACT OF 2007

SEC. 3301. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act of 2007'' or the ''DREAM Act of 2007''.

SEC. 3302. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given that term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

(2) UNIFORMED SERVICES.—The term ''uniformed services'' has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of title 10, United States Code.

SEC. 3303. RESTORATION OF STATE OPTION TO DETERMINE RESIDENCY FOR PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION BENEFITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 505 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1623) is repealed.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The repeal under subsection (a) shall take effect as if included in the enactment of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (division C of Public Law 104–208; 110 Stat. 3009–546).

SEC. 3304. CANCELLATION OF REMOVAL AND ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS OF CERTAIN LONG-TERM RESIDENTS WHO ENTERED THE UNITED STATES AS CHILDREN.

(a) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN LONG-TERM RESIDENTS WHO ENTERED THE UNITED STATES AS CHILDREN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law and except as otherwise provided in this title, the Secretary of Homeland Security may cancel removal of, and adjust to the status of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, subject to the conditional basis described in section 3305, an alien who is inadmissible or deportable from the United States, if the alien demonstrates that—

(A) the alien has been physically present in the United States for a continuous period of not less than 5 years immediately preceding the date of enactment of this title, and had not yet reached the age of 16 years at the time of initial entry;

(B) the alien has been a person of good moral character since the time of application;

(C) the alien—

(i) is not inadmissible under paragraph (2), (3), (6)(E), or (10)(C) of section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)); and

(ii) is not deportable under paragraph (1)(E), (2), or (4) of section 237(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1227(a));

(D) the alien, at the time of application, has been admitted to an institution of higher education in the United States, or has earned a high school diploma or obtained a general education development certificate in the United States; and

(E) the alien has never been under a final administrative or judicial order of exclusion, deportation, or removal, unless the alien—

(i) has remained in the United States under color of law after such order was issued; or

(ii) received the order before attaining the age of 16 years.

(2) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security may waive the ground of ineligibility under section 212(a)(6)(E) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and the ground of deportability under paragraph (1)(E) of section 237(a) of that Act for humanitarian purposes or family unity or when it is otherwise in the public interest.

(3) PROCEDURES.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide a procedure by regulation allowing eligible individuals to apply affirmatively for the relief available under this subsection without being placed in removal proceedings.

(b) TERMINATION OF CONTINUOUS PERIOD.—For purposes of this section, any period of continuous residence or continuous physical presence in the United States of an alien who applies for cancellation of removal under this section shall not terminate when the alien is served a notice to appear under section 239(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1229(a)).

(c) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN BREAKS IN PRESENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An alien shall be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States under subsection (a) if the alien has departed from the United States for any period in excess of 90 days or for any periods in the aggregate exceeding 180 days.

(2) EXTENSIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may extend the time periods described in paragraph (1) if the alien demonstrates that the failure to timely return to the United States was due to exceptional circumstances. The exceptional circumstances determined sufficient to justify an extension should be no less compelling than serious illness of the alien, or death or serious illness of a parent, grandparent, sibling, or child.

(d) EXEMPTION FROM NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Nothing in this section may be construed to apply a numerical limitation on the number of aliens who may be eligible for cancellation of removal or adjustment of status under this section.

(e) REGULATIONS.—

(1) PROPOSED REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall publish proposed regulations implementing this section. Such regulations shall be effective immediately on an interim basis, but are subject to change and revision after public notice and opportunity for a period for public comment.

(2) INTERIM, FINAL REGULATIONS.—Within a reasonable time after publication of the interim regulations in accordance with paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall publish final regulations implementing this section.

(f) REMOVAL OF ALIEN.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may not remove any alien who has a pending application for conditional status under this title.

SEC. 3305. CONDITIONAL PERMANENT RESIDENT STATUS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) CONDITIONAL BASIS FOR STATUS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and except as provided in section 3306, an alien whose status has been adjusted under section 3304 to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence shall be considered to have obtained such status on a conditional basis subject to the provisions of this section. Such conditional permanent resident status shall be valid for a period of 6 years, subject to termination under subsection (b).

(2) NOTICE OF REQUIREMENTS.—

(A) AT TIME OF OBTAINING PERMANENT RESIDENCE.—At the time an alien obtains permanent resident status on a conditional basis under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide for notice to the alien regarding the provisions of this section and the requirements of subsection (c) to have the conditional basis of such status removed.

(B) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO PROVIDE NOTICE.—The failure of the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide a notice under this paragraph—

(i) shall not affect the enforcement of the provisions of this title with respect to the alien; and

(ii) shall not give rise to any private right of action by the alien.

(b) TERMINATION OF STATUS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall terminate the conditional permanent resident status of any alien who obtained such status under this title, if the Secretary determines that the alien—

(A) ceases to meet the requirements of subparagraph (B) or (C) of section 3304(a)(1);

(B) has become a public charge; or

(C) has received a dishonorable or other than honorable discharge from the uniformed services.

(2) RETURN TO PREVIOUS IMMIGRATION STATUS.—Any alien whose conditional permanent resident status is terminated under paragraph (1) shall return to the immigration status the alien had immediately prior to receiving conditional permanent resident status under this title.

(c) REQUIREMENTS OF TIMELY PETITION FOR REMOVAL OF CONDITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In order for the conditional basis of permanent resident status obtained by an alien under subsection (a) to be removed, the alien must file with the Secretary of Homeland Security, in accordance with paragraph (3), a petition which requests the removal of such conditional basis and which provides, under penalty of perjury, the facts and information so that the Secretary may make the determination described in paragraph (2)(A).

(2) ADJUDICATION OF PETITION TO REMOVE CONDITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—If a petition is filed in accordance with paragraph (1) for an alien, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall make a determination as to whether the alien meets the requirements set out in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of subsection (d)(1).

(B) REMOVAL OF CONDITIONAL BASIS IF FAVORABLE DETERMINATION.—If the Secretary determines that the alien meets such requirements, the Secretary shall notify the alien of such determination and immediately remove the conditional basis of the status of the alien.

(C) TERMINATION IF ADVERSE DETERMINATION.—If the Secretary determines that the alien does not meet such requirements, the Secretary shall notify the alien of such determination and terminate the conditional permanent resident status of the alien as of the date of the determination.

(3) TIME TO FILE PETITION.—An alien may petition to remove the conditional basis to lawful resident status during the period beginning 180 days before and ending 2 years after either the date that is 6 years after the date of the granting of conditional permanent resident status or any other expiration date of the conditional permanent resident status as extended by the Secretary of Homeland Security in accordance with this title. The alien shall be deemed in conditional permanent resident status in the United States during the period in which the petition is pending.

(d) DETAILS OF PETITION.—

(1) CONTENTS OF PETITION.—Each petition for an alien under subsection (c)(1) shall contain information to permit the Secretary of Homeland Security to determine whether each of the following requirements is met:

(A) The alien has demonstrated good moral character during the entire period the alien has been a conditional permanent resident.

(B) The alien is in compliance with section 3304(a)(1)(C).

(C) The alien has not abandoned the alien's residence in the United States. The Secretary shall presume that the alien has abandoned such residence if the alien is absent from the United States for more than 365 days, in the aggregate, during the period of conditional residence, unless the alien demonstrates that alien has not abandoned the alien's residence. An alien who is absent from the United States due to active service in the uniformed services has not abandoned the alien's residence in the United States during the period of such service.

(D) The alien has completed at least 1 of the following:

(i) The alien has acquired a degree from an institution of higher education in the United States or has completed at least 2 years, in good standing, in a program for a bachelor's degree or higher degree in the United States.

(ii) The alien has served in the uniformed services for at least 2 years and, if discharged, has received an honorable discharge.

(E) The alien has provided a list of each secondary school (as that term is defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)) that the alien attended in the United States.

(2) HARDSHIP EXCEPTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security may, in the Secretary's discretion, remove the conditional status of an alien if the alien—

(i) satisfies the requirements of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (1);

(ii) demonstrates compelling circumstances for the inability to complete the requirements described in paragraph (1)(D); and

(iii) demonstrates that the alien's removal from the United States would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship to the alien or the alien's spouse, parent, or child who is a citizen or a lawful permanent resident of the United States.

(B) EXTENSION.—Upon a showing of good cause, the Secretary of Homeland Security may extend the period of conditional resident status for the purpose of completing the requirements described in paragraph (1)(D).

(e) TREATMENT OF PERIOD FOR PURPOSES OF NATURALIZATION.—For purposes of title III of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401 et seq.), in the case of an alien who is in the United States as a lawful permanent resident on a conditional basis under this section, the alien shall be considered to have been admitted as an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence and to be in the United States as an alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence. However, the conditional basis must

be removed before the alien may apply for naturalization.

SEC. 3306. RETROACTIVE BENEFITS.

If, on the date of enactment of this title, an alien has satisfied all the requirements of subparagraphs (A) through (E) of section 3304(a)(1) and section 3305(d)(1)(D), the Secretary of Homeland Security may adjust the status of the alien to that of a conditional resident in accordance with section 3304. The alien may petition for removal of such condition at the end of the conditional residence period in accordance with section 3305(c) if the alien has met the requirements of subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of section 3305(d)(1) during the entire period of conditional residence.

SEC. 3307. EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall have exclusive jurisdiction to determine eligibility for relief under this title, except where the alien has been placed into deportation, exclusion, or removal proceedings either prior to or after filing an application for relief under this title, in which case the Attorney General shall have exclusive jurisdiction and shall assume all the powers and duties of the Secretary until proceedings are terminated, or if a final order of deportation, exclusion, or removal is entered the Secretary shall resume all powers and duties delegated to the Secretary under this title.

(b) STAY OF REMOVAL OF CERTAIN ALIENS ENROLLED IN PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The Attorney General shall stay the removal proceedings of any alien who—

(1) meets all the requirements of subparagraphs (A), (B), (C), and (E) of section 3304(a)(1);

(2) is at least 12 years of age; and

(3) is enrolled full time in a primary or secondary school.

(c) EMPLOYMENT.—An alien whose removal is stayed pursuant to subsection (b) may be engaged in employment in the United States consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 201 et seq.) and State and local laws governing minimum age for employment.

(d) LIFT OF STAY.—The Attorney General shall lift the stay granted pursuant to subsection (b) if the alien—

(1) is no longer enrolled in a primary or secondary school; or

(2) ceases to meet the requirements of subsection (b)(1).

SEC. 3308. PENALTIES FOR FALSE STATEMENTS IN APPLICATION.

Whoever files an application for relief under this title and willfully and knowingly falsifies, misrepresents, or conceals a material fact or makes any false or fraudulent statement or representation, or makes or uses any false writing or document knowing the same to contain any false or fraudulent statement or entry, shall be fined in accordance with title 18, United States Code, or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both.

SEC. 3309. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.

(a) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), no officer or employee of the United States may—

(1) use the information furnished by the applicant pursuant to an application filed under this title to initiate removal proceedings against any persons identified in the application;

(2) make any publication whereby the information furnished by any particular individual pursuant to an application under this title can be identified; or

(3) permit anyone other than an officer or employee of the United States Government or, in the case of applications filed under this title with a designated entity, that designated entity, to examine applications filed under this title.

(b) REQUIRED DISCLOSURE.—The Attorney General or the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide the information furnished under this section, and any other information derived from such furnished information, to—

(1) a duly recognized law enforcement entity in connection with an investigation or prosecution of an offense described in paragraph (2) or (3) of section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)), when such information is requested in writing by such entity; or

(2) an official coroner for purposes of affirmatively identifying a deceased individual (whether or not such individual is deceased as a result of a crime).

(c) PENALTY.—Whoever knowingly uses, publishes, or permits information to be examined in violation of this section shall be fined not more than $10,000.

SEC. 3310. EXPEDITED PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS; PROHIBITION ON FEES.

Regulations promulgated under this title shall provide that applications under this title will be considered on an expedited basis and without a requirement for the payment by the applicant of any additional fee for such expedited processing.

SEC. 3311. HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE.

Notwithstanding any provision of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), with respect to assistance provided under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), an alien who adjusts status to that of a lawful permanent resident under this title shall be eligible only for the following assistance under such title:

(1) Student loans under parts B, D, and E of such title IV (20 U.S.C. 1071 et seq., 1087a et seq., 1087aa et seq.), subject to the requirements of such parts.

(2) Federal work-study programs under part C of such title IV (42 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.), subject to the requirements of such part.

(3) Services under such title IV (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.), subject to the requirements for such services.

SEC. 3312. GAO REPORT.

Not later than seven years after the date of enactment of this title, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit a report to the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives setting forth—

(1) the number of aliens who were eligible for cancellation of removal and adjustment of status under section 3304(a);

(2) the number of aliens who applied for adjustment of status under section 3304(a);

(3) the number of aliens who were granted adjustment of status under section 3304(a); and

(4) the number of aliens whose conditional permanent resident status was removed under section 3305.

SA 2238. Mr. DURBIN (for himself and Mr. GRASSLEY) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2143 submitted by Mr. CORNYN and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 1, between lines 1 and 2, insert the following:

DIVISION D—IMMIGRATION

TITLE XXXIII—IMMIGRATION FRAUD PREVENTION

SEC. 3301. SHORT TITLE.

This division may be cited as the ''H–1B and L–1 Visa Fraud and Abuse Prevention Act of 2007''.

SEC. 3302. H–1B EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS.

(a) APPLICATION OF NONDISPLACEMENT AND GOOD FAITH RECRUITMENT REQUIREMENTS TO ALL H–1B EMPLOYERS.—

(1) AMENDMENTS.—Section 212(n) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(n)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (E);

(I) in clause (i), by striking ''(E)(i) In the case of an application described in clause (ii), the'' and inserting ''(E) The''; and

(II) by striking clause (ii);

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''In the case of'' and all that follows through ''where—'' and inserting the following: ''The employer will not place the nonimmigrant with another employer if—''; and

(iii) in subparagraph (G), by striking ''In the case of an application described in subparagraph (E)(ii), subject'' and inserting ''Subject'';

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''If an H–1B-dependent employer'' and inserting ''If an employer that employs H–1B nonimmigrants''; and

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking ''The preceding sentence shall apply to an employer regardless of whether or not the employer is an H–1B-dependent employer.''; and

(C) by striking paragraph (3).

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall apply to applications filed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) NONDISPLACEMENT REQUIREMENT.—

(1) EXTENDING TIME PERIOD FOR NONDISPLACEMENT.—Section 212(n) of such Act, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended—

(A) in paragraph (1)—

(i) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''90 days'' each place it appears and inserting ''180 days'';

(ii) in subparagraph (F)(ii), by striking ''90 days'' each place it appears and inserting ''180 days''; and

(B) in paragraph (2)(C)(iii), by striking ''90 days'' each place it appears and inserting ''180 days''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1)—

(A) shall apply to applications filed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(B) shall not apply to displacements for periods occurring more than 90 days before such date.

(c) PUBLIC LISTING OF AVAILABLE POSITIONS.—

(1) LISTING OF AVAILABLE POSITIONS.—Section 212(n)(1)(C) of such Act is amended—

(A) in clause (i), by striking ''(i) has provided'' and inserting the following:

''(ii)(I) has provided'';

(B) by redesignating clause (ii) as subclause (II); and

(C) by inserting before clause (ii), as redesignated, the following:

''(i) has advertised the job availability on the list described in paragraph (6), for at least 30 calendar days; and''.

(2) LIST MAINTAINED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.—Section 212(n) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(6)(A) Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the Secretary of Labor shall establish a list of

available jobs, which shall be publicly accessible without charge—

''(i) on a website maintained by the Department of Labor, which website shall be searchable by—

''(I) the name, city, State, and zip code of the employer;

''(II) the date on which the job is expected to begin;

''(III) the title and description of the job; and

''(IV) the State and city (or county) at which the work will be performed; and

''(ii) at each 1-stop center created under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105–220).

''(B) Each available job advertised on the list shall include—

''(i) the employer's full legal name;

''(ii) the address of the employer's principal place of business;

''(iii) the employer's city, State and zip code;

''(iv) the employer's Federal Employer Identification Number;

''(v) the phone number, including area code and extension, as appropriate, of the hiring official or other designated official of the employer;

''(vi) the e-mail address, if available, of the hiring official or other designated official of the employer;

''(vii) the wage rate to be paid for the position and, if the wage rate in the offer is expressed as a range, the bottom of the wage range;

''(viii) whether the rate of pay is expressed on an annual, monthly, biweekly, weekly, or hourly basis;

''(ix) a statement of the expected hours per week that the job will require;

''(x) the date on which the job is expected to begin;

''(xi) the date on which the job is expected to end, if applicable;

''(xii) the number of persons expected to be employed for the job;

''(xiii) the job title;

''(xiv) the job description;

''(xv) the city and State of the physical location at which the work will be performed; and

''(xvi) a description of a process by which a United States worker may submit an application to be considered for the job.

''(C) The Secretary of Labor may charge a nominal filing fee to employers who advertise available jobs on the list established under this paragraph to cover expenses for establishing and administering the requirements under this paragraph.

''(D) The Secretary may promulgate rules, after notice and a period for comment—

''(i) to carry out the requirements of this paragraph; and

''(ii) that require employers to provide other information in order to advertise available jobs on the list.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—Paragraph (1) shall take effect for applications filed at least 30 days after the creation of the list described in paragraph (2).

(d) H–1B NONIMMIGRANTS NOT ADMITTED FOR JOBS ADVERTISED OR OFFERED ONLY TO H–1B NONIMMIGRANTS.—Section 212(n)(1) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended—

(1) by inserting after subparagraph (G) the following:

''(H)(i) The employer has not advertised the available jobs specified in the application in an advertisement that states or indicates that—

''(I) the job or jobs are only available to persons who are or who may become H–1B nonimmigrants; or

''(II) persons who are or who may become H–1B nonimmigrants shall receive priority or a preference in the hiring process.

''(ii) The employer has not only recruited persons who are, or who may become, H–1B nonimmigrants to fill the job or jobs.''; and

(2) in the undesignated paragraph at the end, by striking ''The employer'' and inserting the following:

''(K) The employer''.

(e) PROHIBITION OF OUTPLACEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 212(n) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), by amending subparagraph (F) to read as follows:

''(F) The employer shall not place, outsource, lease, or otherwise contract for the placement of an alien admitted or provided status as an H–1B nonimmigrant with another employer;'' and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking subparagraph (E).

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by paragraph (1) shall apply to applications filed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(f) LIMIT ON PERCENTAGE OF H–1B EMPLOYEES.—Section 212(n)(1) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by inserting after subparagraph (H), as added by subsection (d)(1), the following:

''(I) If the employer employs not less than 50 employees in the United States, not more than 50 percent of such employees are H–1B nonimmigrants.''.

(g) WAGE DETERMINATION.—

(1) CHANGE IN MINIMUM WAGES.—Section 212(n)(1) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended—

(A) by amending subparagraph (A) to read as follows:

''(A) The employer—

''(i) is offering and will offer, during the period of authorized employment, to aliens admitted or provided status as an H–1B nonimmigrant, wages, based on the best information available at the time the application is filed, which are not less than the highest of—

''(I) the locally determined prevailing wage level for the occupational classification in the area of employment;

''(II) the median average wage for all workers in the occupational classification in the area of employment; or

''(III) the median wage for skill level 2 in the occupational classification found in the most recent Occupational Employment Statistics survey; and

''(ii) will provide working conditions for such a nonimmigrant that will not adversely affect the working conditions of workers similarly employed.''; and

(B) in subparagraph (D), by inserting ''the wage determination methodology used under subparagraph (A)(i),'' after ''shall contain''.

(2) PROVISION OF W–2 FORMS.—Section 212(n)(1) of such Act is amended by inserting after subparagraph (I), as added by subsection (f), the following:

''(J) If the employer, in such previous period as the Secretary shall specify, employed 1 or more H–1B nonimmigrants, the employer shall submit to the Secretary the Internal Revenue Service Form W–2 Wage and Tax Statement filed by the employer with respect to such nonimmigrants for such period.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to applications filed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(h) IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS.—Section 204 of such Act (8 U.S.C. 1154) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(l) EMPLOYER TO SHARE ALL IMMIGRATION PAPERWORK EXCHANGED WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Not later than 10 working days after receiving a written request from a former, current, or future employee or beneficiary, an employer shall provide the employee or beneficiary with the original (or a certified copy of the original) of all petitions, notices, and other written communication exchanged between the employer and the Department of Labor, the Department of Homeland Security, or any other Federal agency that is related to an immigrant or nonimmigrant petition filed by the employer for the employee or beneficiary.''.

SEC. 3303. H–1B GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY AND REQUIREMENTS.

(a) SAFEGUARDS AGAINST FRAUD AND MISREPRESENTATION IN APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS.—Section 212(n)(1)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as redesignated by section 3302 (d)(2), is amended—

(1) by inserting ''and through the Department of Labor's website, without charge.'' after ''D.C.'';

(2) by inserting '', clear indicators of fraud, misrepresentation of material fact,'' after ''completeness'';

(3) by striking ''or obviously inaccurate'' and inserting '', presents clear indicators of fraud or misrepresentation of material fact, or is obviously inaccurate'';

(4) by striking ''within 7 days of'' and inserting ''not later than 14 days after''; and

(5) by adding at the end the following: ''If the Secretary's review of an application identifies clear indicators of fraud or misrepresentation of material fact, the Secretary may conduct an investigation and hearing under paragraph (2).

(b) INVESTIGATIONS BY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.—Section 212(n)(2) of such Act is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A)—

(A) by striking ''12 months'' and inserting ''24 months''; and

(B) by striking ''The Secretary shall conduct'' and all that follows and inserting ''Upon the receipt of such a complaint, the Secretary may initiate an investigation to determine if such a failure or misrepresentation has occurred.'';

(2) in subparagraph (C)(i)—

(A) by striking ''a condition of paragraph (1)(B), (1)(E), or (1)(F)'' and inserting ''a condition under subparagraph (B), (C)(i), (E), (F), (H), (I), or (J) of paragraph (1)''; and

(B) by striking ''(1)(C)'' and inserting ''(1)(C)(ii)'';

(3) in subparagraph (G)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking ''if the Secretary'' and all that follows and inserting ''with regard to the employer's compliance with the requirements of this subsection.'';

(B) in clause (ii), by striking ''and whose identity'' and all that follows through ''failure or failures.'' and inserting ''the Secretary of Labor may conduct an investigation into the employer's compliance with the requirements of this subsection.'';

(C) in clause (iii), by striking the last sentence;

(D) by striking clauses (iv) and (v);

(E) by redesignating clauses (vi), (vii), and (viii) as clauses (iv), (v), and (vi), respectively;

(F) in clause (iv), as redesignated, by striking ''meet a condition described in clause (ii), unless the Secretary of Labor receives the information not later than 12 months'' and inserting ''comply with the requirements under this subsection, unless the Secretary of Labor receives the information not later than 24 months'';

(G) by amending clause (v), as redesignated, to read as follows:

''(v) The Secretary of Labor shall provide notice to an employer of the intent to conduct an investigation. The notice shall be provided in such a manner, and shall contain

sufficient detail, to permit the employer to respond to the allegations before an investigation is commenced. The Secretary is not required to comply with this clause if the Secretary determines that such compliance would interfere with an effort by the Secretary to investigate or secure compliance by the employer with the requirements of this subsection. A determination by the Secretary under this clause shall not be subject to judicial review.''.

(H) in clause (vi), as redesignated, by striking ''An investigation'' and all that follows through ''the determination.'' and inserting ''If the Secretary of Labor, after an investigation under clause (i) or (ii), determines that a reasonable basis exists to make a finding that the employer has failed to comply with the requirements under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide interested parties with notice of such determination and an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with section 556 of title 5, United States Code, not later than 120 days after the date of such determination.''; and

(I) by adding at the end the following:

''(vii) If the Secretary of Labor, after a hearing, finds a reasonable basis to believe that the employer has violated the requirements under this subsection, the Secretary may impose a penalty under subparagraph (C).''; and

(4) by striking subparagraph (H).

(c) INFORMATION SHARING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—Section 212(n)(2) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by inserting after subparagraph (G) the following:

''(H) The Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services shall provide the Secretary of Labor with any information contained in the materials submitted by H–1B employers as part of the adjudication process that indicates that the employer is not complying with H–1B visa program requirements. The Secretary may initiate and conduct an investigation and hearing under this paragraph after receiving information of noncompliance under this subparagraph.''.

(d) AUDITS.—Section 212(n)(2)(A) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following: ''The Secretary may conduct surveys of the degree to which employers comply with the requirements under this subsection and may conduct annual compliance audits of employers that employ H–1B nonimmigrants. The Secretary shall conduct annual compliance audits of not less than 1 percent of the employers that employ H–1B nonimmigrants during the applicable calendar year. The Secretary shall conduct annual compliance audits of each employer with more than 100 employees who work in the United States if more than 15 percent of such employees are H–1B nonimmigrants.''.

(e) PENALTIES.—Section 212(n)(2)(C) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended—

(1) in clause (i)(I), by striking ''$1,000'' and inserting ''$2,000'';

(2) in clause (ii)(I), by striking ''$5,000'' and inserting ''$10,000''; and

(3) in clause (vi)(III), by striking ''$1,000'' and inserting ''$2,000''.

(f) INFORMATION PROVIDED TO H–1B NONIMMIGRANTS UPON VISA ISSUANCE.—Section 212(n) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3)(A) Upon issuing an H–1B visa to an applicant outside the United States, the issuing office shall provide the applicant with—

''(i) a brochure outlining the employer's obligations and the employee's rights under Federal law, including labor and wage protections;

''(ii) the contact information for Federal agencies that can offer more information or assistance in clarifying employer obligations and workers' rights; and

''(iii) a copy of the employer's H–1B application for the position that the H–1B nonimmigrant has been issued the visa to fill.

''(B) Upon the issuance of an H–1B visa to an alien inside the United States, the officer of the Department of Homeland Security shall provide the applicant with—

''(i) a brochure outlining the employer's obligations and the employee's rights under Federal law, including labor and wage protections;

''(ii) the contact information for Federal agencies that can offer more information or assistance in clarifying employer's obligations and workers' rights; and

''(iii) a copy of the employer's H–1B application for the position that the H–1B nonimmigrant has been issued the visa to fill.''.

SEC. 3304. L–1 VISA FRAUD AND ABUSE PROTECTIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 214(c)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(c)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Attorney General'' each place it appears and inserting ''Secretary of Homeland Security'';

(2) in subparagraph (E), by striking ''In the case of an alien spouse admitted under section 101(a)(15)(L), who'' and inserting ''Except as provided in subparagraph (H), if an alien spouse admitted under section 101(a)(15)(L)''; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

''(G)(i) If the beneficiary of a petition under this subsection is coming to the United States to open, or be employed in, a new facility, the petition may be approved for up to 12 months only if the employer operating the new facility has—

''(I) a business plan;

''(II) sufficient physical premises to carry out the proposed business activities; and

''(III) the financial ability to commence doing business immediately upon the approval of the petition.

''(ii) An extension of the approval period under clause (i) may not be granted until the importing employer submits an application to the Secretary of Homeland Security that contains—

''(I) evidence that the importing employer meets the requirements of this subsection;

''(II) evidence that the beneficiary meets the requirements under section 101(a)(15)(L);

''(III) a statement summarizing the original petition;

''(IV) evidence that the importing employer has fully complied with the business plan submitted under clause (i)(I);

''(V) evidence of the truthfulness of any representations made in connection with the filing of the original petition;

''(VI) evidence that the importing employer, during the preceding 12 months, has been doing business at the new facility through regular, systematic, and continuous provision of goods or services, or has otherwise been taking commercially reasonable steps to establish the new facility as a commercial enterprise;

''(VII) a statement of the duties the beneficiary has performed at the new facility during the preceding 12 months and the duties the beneficiary will perform at the new facility during the extension period approved under this clause;

''(VIII) a statement describing the staffing at the new facility, including the number of employees and the types of positions held by such employees;

''(IX) evidence of wages paid to employees;

''(X) evidence of the financial status of the new facility; and

''(XI) any other evidence or data prescribed by the Secretary.

''(iii) Notwithstanding subclauses (I) through (VI) of clause (ii), and subject to the maximum period of authorized admission set forth in subparagraph (D), the Secretary of Homeland Security may approve a petition subsequently filed on behalf of the beneficiary to continue employment at the facility described in this subsection for a period beyond the initially granted 12-month period if the importing employer demonstrates that the failure to satisfy any of the requirements described in those subclauses was directly caused by extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the importing employer.

''(iv) For purposes of determining the eligibility of an alien for classification under section 101(a)(15)(L), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall work cooperatively with the Secretary of State to verify a company or facility's existence in the United States and abroad.''.

(b) RESTRICTION ON BLANKET PETITIONS.—Section 214(c)(2)(A) of such Act is amended to read as follows:

''(2)(A) The Secretary of Homeland Security may not permit the use of blanket petitions to import aliens as nonimmigrants under section 101(a)(15)(L).''.

(c) PROHIBITION ON OUTPLACEMENT.—Section 214(c)(2) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(H) An employer who imports 1 or more aliens as nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L) shall not place, outsource, lease, or otherwise contract for the placement of an alien admitted or provided status as an L–1 nonimmigrant with another employer.''.

(d) INVESTIGATIONS AND AUDITS BY DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY.—

(1) DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY INVESTIGATIONS.—Section 214(c)(2) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(I)(i) The Secretary of Homeland Security may initiate an investigation of any employer that employs nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L) with regard to the employer's compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

''(ii) If the Secretary of Homeland Security receives specific credible information from a source who is likely to have knowledge of an employer's practices, employment conditions, or compliance with the requirements under this subsection, the Secretary may conduct an investigation into the employer's compliance with the requirements of this subsection. The Secretary may withhold the identity of the source from the employer, and the source's identity shall not be subject to disclosure under section 552 of title 5.

''(iii) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish a procedure for any person desiring to provide to the Secretary of Homeland Security information described in clause (ii) that may be used, in whole or in part, as the basis for the commencement of an investigation described in such clause, to provide the information in writing on a form developed and provided by the Secretary of Homeland Security and completed by or on behalf of the person.

''(iv) No investigation described in clause (ii) (or hearing described in clause (vi) based on such investigation) may be conducted with respect to information about a failure to comply with the requirements under this subsection, unless the Secretary of Homeland Security receives the information not later than 24 months after the date of the alleged failure.

''(v) Before commencing an investigation of an employer under clause (i) or (ii), the Secretary of Homeland Security shall provide notice to the employer of the intent to

conduct such investigation. The notice shall be provided in such a manner, and shall contain sufficient detail, to permit the employer to respond to the allegations before an investigation is commenced. The Secretary is not required to comply with this clause if the Secretary determines that to do so would interfere with an effort by the Secretary to investigate or secure compliance by the employer with the requirements of this subsection. There shall be no judicial review of a determination by the Secretary under this clause.

''(vi) If the Secretary of Homeland Security, after an investigation under clause (i) or (ii), determines that a reasonable basis exists to make a finding that the employer has failed to comply with the requirements under this subsection, the Secretary shall provide interested parties with notice of such determination and an opportunity for a hearing in accordance with section 556 of title 5, United States Code, not later than 120 days after the date of such determination. If such a hearing is requested, the Secretary shall make a finding concerning the matter by not later than 120 days after the date of the hearing.

''(vii) If the Secretary of Homeland Security, after a hearing, finds a reasonable basis to believe that the employer has violated the requirements under this subsection, the Secretary may impose a penalty under section 214(c)(2)(J).''.

(2) AUDITS.—Section 214(c)(2)(I) of such Act, as added by paragraph (1), is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(viii) The Secretary of Homeland Security may conduct surveys of the degree to which employers comply with the requirements under this section and may conduct annual compliance audits of employers that employ H–1B nonimmigrants. The Secretary shall conduct annual compliance audits of not less than 1 percent of the employers that employ nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L) during the applicable calendar year. The Secretary shall conduct annual compliance audits of each employer with more than 100 employees who work in the United States if more than 15 percent of such employees are nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L).''.

(3) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Section 214(c)(8) of such Act is amended by inserting ''(L),'' after ''(H),''.

(e) PENALTIES.—Section 214(c)(2) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(J)(i) If the Secretary of Homeland Security finds, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, a failure by an employer to meet a condition under subparagraph (F), (G), (H), (I), or (K) or a misrepresentation of material fact in a petition to employ 1 or more aliens as nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L)—

''(I) the Secretary of Homeland Security may impose such other administrative remedies (including civil monetary penalties in an amount not to exceed $2,000 per violation) as the Secretary determines to be appropriate; and

''(II) the Secretary of Homeland Security may not, during a period of at least 1 year, approve a petition for that employer to employ 1 or more aliens as such nonimmigrants.

''(ii) If the Secretary of Homeland Security finds, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, a willful failure by an employer to meet a condition under subparagraph (F), (G), (H), (I), or (K) or a misrepresentation of material fact in a petition to employ 1 or more aliens as nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L)—

''(I) the Secretary of Homeland Security may impose such other administrative remedies (including civil monetary penalties in an amount not to exceed $10,000 per violation) as the Secretary determines to be appropriate; and

''(II) the Secretary of Homeland Security may not, during a period of at least 2 years, approve a petition filed for that employer to employ 1 or more aliens as such nonimmigrants.

''(iii) If the Secretary of Homeland Security finds, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, a willful failure by an employer to meet a condition under subparagraph (L)(i)—

''(I) the Secretary of Homeland Security may impose such other administrative remedies (including civil monetary penalties in an amount not to exceed $10,000 per violation) as the Secretary determines to be appropriate; and

''(II) the employer shall be liable to employees harmed for lost wages and benefits.''.

(f) WAGE DETERMINATION.—

(1) CHANGE IN MINIMUM WAGES.—Section 214(c)(2) of such Act, as amended by this section, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(K)(i) An employer that employs a nonimmigrant described in section 101(a)(15)(L) shall—

''(I) offer such nonimmigrant, during the period of authorized employment, wages, based on the best information available at the time the application is filed, which are not less than the highest of—

''(aa) the locally determined prevailing wage level for the occupational classification in the area of employment;

''(bb) the median average wage for all workers in the occupational classification in the area of employment; or

''(cc) the median wage for skill level 2 in the occupational classification found in the most recent Occupational Employment Statistics survey; and

''(II) provide working conditions for such nonimmigrant that will not adversely affect the working conditions of workers similarly employed.

''(ii) If an employer, in such previous period specified by the Secretary of Homeland Security, employed 1 or more L–1 nonimmigrants, the employer shall provide to the Secretary of Homeland Security the Internal Revenue Service Form W–2 Wage and Tax Statement filed by the employer with respect to such nonimmigrants for such period.

''(iii) It is a failure to meet a condition under this subparagraph for an employer, who has filed a petition to import 1 or more aliens as nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L), to—

''(I) require such a nonimmigrant to pay a penalty for ceasing employment with the employer before a date mutually agreed to by the nonimmigrant and the employer; or

''(II) fail to offer to such a nonimmigrant, during the nonimmigrant's period of authorized employment, on the same basis, and in accordance with the same criteria, as the employer offers to United States workers, benefits and eligibility for benefits, including—

''(aa) the opportunity to participate in health, life, disability, and other insurance plans;

''(bb) the opportunity to participate in retirement and savings plans; and

''(cc) cash bonuses and noncash compensation, such as stock options (whether or not based on performance).

''(iv) The Secretary of Homeland Security shall determine whether a required payment under clause (iii)(I) is a penalty (and not liquidated damages) pursuant to relevant State law.''.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to applications filed on or after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 3305. WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.

(a) H–1B WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—Section 212(n)(2)(C)(iv) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(n)(2)(C)(iv)) is amended—

(1) by inserting ''take, fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action, or'' before ''to intimidate''; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: ''An employer that violates this clause shall be liable to the employees harmed by such violation for lost wages and benefits.''.

(b) L–1 WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS.—Section 214(c)(2) of such Act, as amended by section 3304, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(L)(i) It is a violation of this subparagraph for an employer who has filed a petition to import 1 or more aliens as nonimmigrants described in section 101(a)(15)(L) to take, fail to take, or threaten to take or fail to take, a personnel action, or to intimidate, threaten, restrain, coerce, blacklist, discharge, or discriminate in any other manner against an employee because the employee—

''(I) has disclosed information that the employee reasonably believes evidences a violation of this subsection, or any rule or regulation pertaining to this subsection; or

''(II) cooperates or seeks to cooperate with the requirements of this subsection, or any rule or regulation pertaining to this subsection.

''(ii) An employer that violates this subparagraph shall be liable to the employees harmed by such violation for lost wages and benefits.

''(iii) In this subparagraph, the term 'employee' includes—

''(I) a current employee;

''(II) a former employee; and

''(III) an applicant for employment.''.

SEC. 3306. ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Labor is authorized to hire 200 additional employees to administer, oversee, investigate, and enforce programs involving H–1B nonimmigrant workers.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

TITLE XXXIV—EMPLOYMENT BASED VISAS

SA 2239. Mr. SPECTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1070. PROHIBITION ON EXPULSION, RETURN, OR EXTRADITION OF PERSONS BY THE UNITED STATES TO COUNTRIES ENGAGING IN TORTURE.

(a) PROHIBITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Part IV of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new chapter:

''CHAPTER 181—EXPULSION, RETURN, OR EXTRADITION OF PERSONS TO COUNTRIES ENGAGING IN TORTURE

''Sec.

''4101. Definitions.
''4102. Prohibition on expulsion, return, or extradition of persons by the United States to countries engaging in torture.
''4103. Approval of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court required for transfers of persons between foreign countries.
''4104. Annual reports on countries using torture.

''§ 4101. Definitions

''In this chapter:

''(1) The term 'appropriate congressional committees' means—

''(A) the Committees on Armed Services, Foreign Relations, Homeland Security and Government Affairs, and the Judiciary and the Select Committee on Intelligence of the Senate; and

''(B) the Committees on Armed Services, Homeland Security, the Judiciary, and International Relations, and the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of Representatives.

''(2) The term 'appropriate government agencies' means the following:

''(A) The elements of the intelligence community (as defined in or specified under section 3(4) of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 401a(4))).

''(B) Any element (other than an element referred to in subparagraph (A)) of the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice or any other Federal law enforcement, national security, intelligence, or homeland security agency that takes or assumes custody or control of persons or transports persons in its custody or control outside the United States.

''(3) The term 'Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court' means the court established by section 103(a) of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1803(a)).

''(4) The term 'substantial grounds', in the case of an evidentiary showing, means a showing that a fact is more likely than not.

''§ 4102. Prohibition on expulsion, return, or extradition of persons by the United States to countries engaging in torture

''(a) PROHIBITION.—No person in the custody or control of any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States, or any contractor thereof, shall be expelled, returned, or extradited to another country, whether directly or indirectly, unless—

''(1) such person—

''(A) is being legally extradited under a bilateral or multilateral extradition treaty or legally removed under the immigration laws of the United States; and

''(B) has recourse to a United States court of competent jurisdiction before such extradition or removal to challenge such extradition or removal on the basis that there are substantial grounds for believing that such person would be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country;

''(2) in the case of a transfer of such person from the territory of the United States through means other than those covered by paragraph (1), such person has recourse to an appropriate district court of the United States before such transfer to challenge such transfer on the basis that there are substantial grounds for believing that such person would be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country; or

''(3) in the case of the transfer of such person from one foreign country to another foreign country, the transfer has the prior approval of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court in accordance with section 4103 of this title.

''(b) JURISDICTION.—

''(1) JURISDICTION OF DISTRICT COURTS.—In the event the district courts of the United States do not have jurisdiction under any other provision of law to hear a challenge described in subsection (a)(2), the district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction to hear such a challenge by reason of this section.

''(2) JURISDICTION OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SURVEILLANCE COURT.—The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court shall have jurisdiction to consider petitions under section 4103 of this title in accordance with the provisions of that section, and to make determinations, certifications, and approvals of and with respect to such petitions as provided in that section.

''(c) RELEASE OF CERTAIN PERSONS.—If the legal basis for detention of a person to be transferred under subsection (a)(2) no longer applies pending such transfer, including the dismissal or final disposition of criminal charges, immigration proceedings, or material witness obligations, such person shall be released unless the attorney for the appropriate government agency first obtains a warrant from a district court of the United States authorizing continuing detention of such person, upon a showing that—

''(1) there are substantial grounds to believe such person would not be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country;

''(2) there is probable cause to believe such person is an agent of a foreign power (as that term is defined in section 101(b) of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801(b)); and

''(3) the detention of such person pending transfer is necessary to ensure the safety of the community or the appearance of such person for transfer.

''(d) PRESUMPTION OF SUBSTANTIAL GROUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If the receiving country is included among the countries on the most current list submitted to the appropriate congressional committees by the Secretary of State under section 4104 of this title, a court reviewing the proposed transfer of a person under paragraph (1) or (2) of subsection (a), or a court reviewing an application for a warrant with respect to a person under subsection (c), shall, except as provided in paragraph (2), presume there are substantial grounds for believing that such person would be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The presumption in paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to a person if the head of the appropriate government agency concerned makes an affirmative showing to the court that there is in place a mechanism to assure the head of the agency, in a verifiable manner, that such person will not be tortured in the receiving country including, at a minimum, immediate, unfettered, and continuing access from the point of transfer to such person by the International Committee of the Red Cross or its designee.

''§ 4103. Approval of Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court required for transfers of persons between foreign countries

''(a) IN GENERAL.—The Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court shall, upon a petition submitted under subsection (b), approve the transfer of a person covered by such petition from one foreign country to another foreign country for purposes of section 4102(a)(3) of this title if the Court determines and certifies that there are substantial grounds to believe such person would not be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country.

''(b) PETITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an appropriate government agency seeking the transfer of a person from one foreign country to another foreign country for purposes of section 4102(a)(3) of this title shall submit to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court a petition seeking the approval and certification of the Court under subsection (a).

''(2) ELEMENTS.—The petition submitted under this subsection with respect to a person shall include the following:

''(A) The name, nationality, and current location of such person.

''(B) A factual explanation of the facts that caused, or are expected to cause, such person to be within the custody or control, whether direct or indirect, of the United States Government.

''(C) The specific purpose for the transfer covered by the petition, including the receiving country of the transfer.

''(D) A declaration that the transfer does not violate any applicable law or treaty of the United States.

''(E) Any other information the Court considers appropriate for purposes of this section.

''(c) PRESUMPTION OF SUBSTANTIAL GROUNDS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—If the receiving country in a petition under subsection (b) is included among the countries on the most current list submitted to the appropriate congressional committees by the Secretary of State under section 4104 of this title, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court shall, except as provided in paragraph (2), presume there are substantial grounds for believing that the person covered by the petition would be in danger of being subjected to torture in the receiving country.

''(2) EXCEPTION.—The presumption in paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to a person if the head of the appropriate government agency concerned makes an affirmative showing to the Court that there is in place a mechanism to assure the head of the agency, in a verifiable manner, that such person will not be tortured in the receiving country including, at a minimum, immediate, unfettered, and continuing access from the point of transfer to such person by the International Committee of the Red Cross or its designee.

''§ 4104. Annual reports on countries using torture

''(a) ANNUAL REPORTS REQUIRED.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees on an annual basis a report listing each country where torture is known to be used.

''(b) BASIS OF REPORTS.—Each report shall be compiled on the basis of the information contained in the most recent annual report of the Secretary of State submitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate under section 116(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d)).''.

(2) CLERICAL AMENDMENTS.—The tables of chapters at the beginning of title 28, United States Code, and at the beginning of part IV of such title, are each amended by adding after the item relating to chapter 180 the following new item:

''181. Expulsion, Return, or Extradition of Persons to Countries Engaging in Torture ..... 4101''.

(b) REGULATIONS.—

(1) INTERIM REGULATIONS.—Not later than 60 days after the effective date of this section under subsection (e), the heads of the appropriate government agencies shall prescribe interim regulations for the purpose of carrying out chapter 181 of title 28, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), and implementing the obligations of the United States under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture, subject to any reservations, understandings, declarations, and provisos

contained in the Senate resolution advising and consenting to the ratification of the Convention Against Torture.

(2) FINAL REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after interim regulations are prescribed under paragraph (1), and following a period of notice and opportunity for public comment on such interim regulations, the heads of the appropriate government agencies shall prescribe final regulations for the purposes described in paragraph (1).

(3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.—The term ''appropriate government agencies'' has the meaning given that term in section 4101 of title 28, United States Code (as so added).

(B) CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE.—The term ''Convention Against Torture'' means the Convention Against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment done at New York, December 10, 1984.

(c) INITIAL REPORT ON COUNTRIES USING TORTURE.—The Secretary of State shall submit the initial report required by section 4104(a) of title 28, United States Code (as so added), not later than 30 days after the effective date of this section under subsection (e).

(d) REPEAL OF SUPERSEDED AUTHORITY.—

(1) REPEAL.—Section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (division G of Public Law 105–277; 112 Stat. 2681–822; 8 U.S.C. 1231 note) is repealed.

(2) TEMPORARY CONTINUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF CURRENT REGULATIONS.—Regulations prescribed under section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 that are in effect on the effective date of this section under subsection (e) shall remain in effect until the heads of the appropriate government agencies prescribe interim regulations under subsection (b)(1).

(e) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amendments made by this section shall take effect on the date that is 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2240. Mr. VITTER submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title X of division A, add the following:

SEC. 10___. PROHIBITION OF RESTRICTION ON USE OF AMOUNTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President shall not prohibit the use by the State of Louisiana under the Road Home Program of that State of any amounts described in subsection (d), based upon—

(1) the existence or extent of any requirement or condition under that program that—

(A) limits the amount made available to an eligible homeowner who does not agree to remain an owner and occupant of a home in Louisiana; or

(B) waives the applicability of any limitation described in subparagraph (A) for eligible homeowners who are elderly or senior citizens; or

(2) any requirement under section 404(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c(a)) to determine cost effectiveness.

(b) WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), in using amounts described in subsection (d), the President shall waive the requirements of section 206.434(c) of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling), or specify alternative requirements, upon a request by the State of Louisiana that such waiver is required to facilitate the timely use of funds or a guarantee provided under section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c).

(2) EXCEPTION.—The President may not waive any requirement relating to fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, or the environment under paragraph (1).

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Except as provided in subsections (a) and (b), section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) shall apply to amounts described in subsection (d) that are used by the State of Louisiana under the Road Home Program of that State.

(d) COVERED AMOUNTS.—The amounts described in this subsection are any amounts provided to the State of Louisiana because of Hurricane Katrina of 2005 or Hurricane Rita of 2005 under the hazard mitigation grant program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency under section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c).

SA 2241. Mr. MCCONNELL proposed an amendment to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of the bill add the following:

SEC. 1535. SENSE OF THE SENATE ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF A FAILED STATE IN IRAQ.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) A failed state in Iraq would become a safe haven for Islamic radicals, including al Qaeda and Hezbollah, who are determined to attack the United States and United States allies.

(2) The Iraq Study Group report found that ''[a] chaotic Iraq could provide a still stronger base of operations for terrorists who seek to act regionally or even globally''.

(3) The Iraq Study Group noted that ''Al Qaeda will portray any failure by the United States in Iraq as a significant victory that will be featured prominently as they recruit for their cause in the region and around the world''.

(4) A National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the consequences of a premature withdrawal from Iraq would be that—

(A) Al Qaeda would attempt to use Anbar province to plan further attacks outside of Iraq;

(B) neighboring countries would consider actively intervening in Iraq; and

(C) sectarian violence would significantly increase in Iraq, accompanied by massive civilian casualties and displacement.

(5) The Iraq Study Group found that ''a premature American departure from Iraq would almost certainly produce greater sectarian violence and further deterioration of conditions. . . . The near-term results would be a significant power vacuum, greater human suffering, regional destabilization, and a threat to the global economy. Al Qaeda would depict our withdrawal as a historic victory.''

(6) A failed state in Iraq could lead to broader regional conflict, possibly involving Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

(7) The Iraq Study group noted that ''Turkey could send troops into northern Iraq to prevent Kurdistan from declaring independence''.

(8) The Iraq Study Group noted that ''Iran could send troops to restore stability in southern Iraq and perhaps gain control of oil fields. The regional influence of Iran could rise at a time when that country is on a path to producing nuclear weapons.''

(9) A failed state in Iraq would lead to massive humanitarian suffering, including widespread ethnic cleansing and countless refugees and internally displaced persons, many of whom will be tortured and killed for having assisted Coalition forces.

(10) A recent editorial in the New York Times stated, ''Americans must be clear that Iraq, and the region around it, could be even bloodier and more chaotic after Americans leave. There could be reprisals against those who worked with American forces, further ethnic cleansing, even genocide. Potentially destabilizing refugee flows could hit Jordan and Syria. Iran and Turkey could be tempted to make power grabs.''

(11) The Iraq Study Group found that ''[i]f we leave and Iraq descends into chaos, the long-range consequences could eventually require the United States to return''.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate should commit itself to a strategy that will not leave a failed state in Iraq; and

(2) the Senate should not pass legislation that will undermine our military's ability to prevent a failed state in Iraq.

SA 2242. Mr. BIDEN (for himself, Ms. CANTWELL, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. POLICY AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT BASES IN IRAQ.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) According to a September 2006 poll conducted by the Program for International Policy Attitudes at the University of Maryland, 97 percent of Sunni Arabs and 77 percent of all Iraqis believe that the United States intends to maintain permanent bases in Iraq.

(2) General John Abizaid testified before Congress in March 2006 that the United States ''must make clear to the people of the region we have no designs on their territory or resources''.

(3) Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, in an April 13, 2007, interview with al-Arabiya Television, said, ''When we see that our forces are built, and that we are prepared to take full responsibility for the security issue, we will ask the international forces to leave the country.''

(4) The Iraq Study Group recommended that ''the United States can begin to shape a positive climate for its diplomatic efforts, internationally and within Iraq, through public statements by President Bush that reject the notion that the United States seeks to control Iraq's oil, or seeks permanent military bases within Iraq''.

(5) President George W. Bush has not adequately publicly stated that the United

States does not seek permanent military bases in Iraq.

(6) A declaration that the United States does not seek permanent military bases in Iraq should not be taken as a sign of a precipitous military redeployment from Iraq.

(7) United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 (2004) resolves that United States and Coalition forces in Iraq are present at the request of the Government of Iraq and that the mandate of these forces shall be reviewed at least every 12 months and will terminate at the request of the Government of Iraq.

(b) SENSE OF THE SENATE.—The Senate calls upon the President—

(1) to communicate a message to the people of Iraq that the United States neither seeks to control Iraq's oil resources nor seeks permanent United States military bases in Iraq; and

(2) to direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to work with other Members of the Security Council and the Government of Iraq to craft in a timely manner a Security Council Resolution to update the mandate of the Multi-National Force-Iraq.

(c) REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter until January 1, 2009, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress an unclassified report, with classified annexes as necessary, on the status of United States military installations in Iraq, which shall include the following elements:

(1) Information on military installations that have been transferred to Iraqi control, that remain under United States control, and that have been decommissioned.

(2) A schedule on plans to turn over the remaining military installations to Iraqi control.

(3) Information on negotiations towards a status of forces agreement between the United States and the Government of Iraq.

(4) Specific information on the following military installations:

(A) Camp Al Asad (Anbar governorate).

(B) Logistics Support Area Anaconda (Salah ad Din governorate).

(C) Contingency Operating Base Speicher – Al Sahra Airfield (Salah ad Din governorate).

(D) Camp Victory (Anbar governorate).

(E) Camp Adder at Tallil Airbase (Dhi Qar governorate).

(F) Camp Korean Village at Al-Walid Airbase (Anbar governorate).

(G) Forward Operating Base Endurance at Qayyarah Airbase West (Ninewah governorate).

(H) Convoy Support Center Scania (Qadisiyah governorate).

SA 2243. Mr. AKAKA submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following:

SEC. 214. ANTI-TERRORISM FORCE PROTECTION HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY SYSTEMS FOR INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RECONNAISSANCE TARGETING AND ENGAGEMENT OPERATIONS.

Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(2) for research, development, test, and evaluation, Navy, and available for Power Projection Advanced Technology (PE #0603114N), $3,000,000 may be available for the development of an Autonomous Unmanned Surface Vessel as a high-endurance, Anti-Terrorism Force Protection, Hydrographic Survey, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance system supporting military missions.

SA 2244. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1031. PROVISION OF CONTACT INFORMATION OF SEPARATING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO STATE VETERANS AGENCIES AND LOCAL OFFICES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Upon the separation of a member of the Armed Forces from the Armed Forces, the Secretary of Defense shall, upon the consent of the member, provide the address and other appropriate contact information of the member to the State veterans agency and every office of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the State in which the veteran will first reside after separation.

SA 2245. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 2055 submitted by Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 2, line 9, insert ''and every office of the Department of Veterans Affairs'' after ''State veterans agency''.

SA 2246. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1031. PROVISION OF CONTACT INFORMATION OF SEPARATING MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO STATE VETERANS AGENCIES AND LOCAL OFFICES OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS.

Upon the separation of a member of the Armed Forces from the Armed Forces, the Secretary of Defense shall, upon the consent of the member, provide the address and other appropriate contact information of the member to the State veterans agency and the local office of the Department of Veterans Affairs in the State in which the veteran will first reside after separation.

SA 2247. Mr. SANDERS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment 2055 submitted by Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself and Mrs. BOXER) and intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 2, line 9, insert ''and the local office of the Department of Veterans Affairs'' after ''State veterans agency''.

SA 2248. Mr. DORGAN (for himself and Mr. WYDEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title VIII, add the following:

SEC. 865. CONTRACTOR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

(a) PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS RELATING TO INHERENTLY GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS.—The head of an agency may not enter into a contract for the performance of any inherently governmental function.

(b) PROHIBITION ON CONTRACTS FOR CONTRACT OVERSIGHT.—

(1) PROHIBITION.—The head of an agency may not enter into a contract for the performance of acquisition functions closely associated with inherently governmental functions with any entity unless the head of the agency determines in writing that—

(A) neither that entity nor any related entity will be responsible for performing any of the work under a contract which the entity will help plan, evaluate, select a source, manage or oversee; and

(B) the agency has taken appropriate steps to prevent or mitigate any organizational conflict of interest that may arise because the entity—

(i) has a separate ongoing business relationship, such as a joint venture or contract, with any of the contractors to be overseen;

(ii) would be placed in a position to affect the value or performance of work it or any related entity is doing under any other Government contract;

(iii) has a reverse role with the contractor to be overseen under one or more separate Government contracts; or

(iv) has some other relationship with the contractor to be overseen that could reasonably appear to bias the contractor's judgment.

(2) RELATED ENTITY DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ''related entity'', with respect to a contractor, means any subsidiary, parent, affiliate, joint venture, or other entity related to the contractor.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) The term ''agency'' means the Department of Defense, and any department, agency, and element of the Department of Defense, and includes the Coast Guard when it is operating as a service in the Navy.

(2) The term ''inherently governmental functions'' has the meaning given to such term in part 7.5 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(3) The term ''functions closely associated with governmental functions'' means the functions described in section 7.503(d) of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(4) The term ''organizational conflict of interest'' has the meaning given such term in part 9.5 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE AND APPLICABILITY.—This section shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act and shall apply to—

(1) contracts entered into on or after such date;

(2) any task or delivery order issued on or after such date under a contract entered into before, on, or after such date; and

(3) any decision on or after such date to exercise an option or otherwise extend a contract for the performance of a function relating to contract oversight regardless of whether such contract was entered into before, on, or after such date.

SA 2249. Mr. BINGAMAN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XI, add the following:

SEC. 1107. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF THE NUCLEAR MISSIONS OF THE NAVY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Navy is authorized to carry out a program to provide scholarships, fellowships, and grants for pursuit of programs of education at institutions of higher education that lead to degrees in engineering and technical fields that are necessary for a workforce to support the nuclear missions of the Navy.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The program under subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) Merit-based scholarships for undergraduate study.

(2) Research fellowships for study the graduate level.

(3) Grants to support the establishment at 2-year public institutions of higher education of programs of study and training that lead to degrees in engineering and technical fields that are necessary for a workforce to support the nuclear missions of the Navy.

(4) Grants to increase the utilization of training, research, and test reactors at institutions of higher education.

(5) Any other elements that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In developing the program, the Secretary shall consult with trade organizations, technical societies, organized labor organizations, and other bodies having an interest in the program.

(d) REPORT ON PROGRAM.—Not later than January 31, 2008, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report on the program under subsection (a), including a description of the program and a statement of the funding required during fiscal years 2009 through 2013 to carry out the program.

(e) REPORT ON WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy shall jointly submit to Congress a report on the requirements for a workforce to support the nuclear missions of the Navy during the 10-year period beginning on the date of the report.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report shall address anticipated changes to the nuclear missions of the Navy during the 10-year period beginning on the date of the report, anticipated workforce attrition, and retirement, and recruiting trends during that period and knowledge retention programs within the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, the national laboratories, and federally funded research facilities.

SA 2250. Mrs. MCCASKILL submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 703. REVIEW OF LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS, SOCIAL WORKERS, AND MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS UNDER THE TRICARE PROGRAM.

(a) REVIEW REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall enter into a contract with the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, or another similarly qualified independent academic medical organization, for the purpose of—

(1) conducting an independent study of the comparability of credentials, preparation, and training of individuals practicing as licensed mental health counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists under the TRICARE program to provide mental health services; and

(2) making recommendations for permitting such professionals to practice independently under the TRICARE program.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The study required by subsection (a) shall provide for each of the health care professions referred to in subsection (a)(1) the following:

(1) An assessment of the educational requirements and curriculums relevant to mental health practice for members of such profession, including types of degrees recognized, certification standards for graduate programs for such profession, and recognition of undergraduate coursework for completion of graduate degree requirements.

(2) An assessment of State licensing requirements for members of such profession, including for each level of licensure if a State issues more than one type of license for the profession. The assessment shall examine requirements in the areas of education, training, examination, continuing education, and ethical standards, and shall include an evaluation of the extent to which States, through their scope of practice, either implicitly or explicitly authorize members of such profession to diagnose and treat mental illnesses.

(3) An analysis of the requirements for clinical experience in such profession to be recognized under regulations for the TRICARE program, and recommendations, if any, for standardization or adjustment of such requirements with those of the other professions.

(4) An assessment of the extent to which practitioners under such profession are authorized to practice independently under other Federal programs (such as the Medicare program, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Indian Health Service, Head Start, and the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program), and a review the relationship, if any, between recognition of such profession under the Medicare program and independent practice authority for such profession under the TRICARE program.

(5) An assessment of the extent to which practitioners under such profession are authorized to practice independently under private insurance plans. The assessment shall identify the States having laws requiring private insurers to cover, or offer coverage of, the services of members of such profession, and shall identify the conditions, if any, that are placed on coverage of practitioners under such profession by insurance plans and how frequently these types of conditions are used by insurers.

(6) An historical review of the regulations issued by the Department of Defense regarding which members of such profession are recognized as providers under the TRICARE program as independent practitioners, and an examination of the recognition by the Department of third party certification for members of such profession.

(c) PROVIDERS STUDIED.—It the sense of Congress that the study required by subsection (a) should focus only on those practitioners of each health care profession referred to in subsection (a)(1) who are permitted to practice under regulations for the TRICARE program as specified in section 119.6 of title 32, Code of Federal Regulations.

(d) CLINICAL CAPABILITIES STUDIES.—The study required by subsection (a) shall include a review of outcome studies and of the literature regarding the comparative quality and effectiveness of care provided by practitioners within each of the health care professions referred to in subsection (a)(1), and provide an independent review of the findings.

(e) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRICARE INDEPENDENT PRACTICE AUTHORITY.—The recommendations provided under subsection (a)(2) shall include specific recommendation (whether positive or negative) regarding modifications of current policy for the TRICARE program with respect to allowing members of each of the health care professions referred to in subsection (a)(1) to practice independently under the TRICARE program, including recommendations regarding possible revision of requirements for recognition of practitioners under each such profession.

(f) REPORT .—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives a report on the review required by subsection (a).

SA 2251. Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CASEY, Ms. COLLINS, and Mr. GRAHAM) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. JUSTICE FOR MARINES AND OTHER VICTIMS OF STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM ACT.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the ''Justice for Marines and Other Victims of State-Sponsored Terrorism Act''.

(b) TERRORISM EXCEPTION TO IMMUNITY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 97 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting after section 1605 the following:

''§ 1605A. Terrorism exception to the jurisdictional immunity of a foreign state

''(a) IN GENERAL.—

''(1) NO IMMUNITY.—A foreign state shall not be immune from the jurisdiction of courts of the United States or of the States in any case not otherwise covered by this chapter in which money damages are sought against a foreign state for personal injury or death that was caused by an act of torture, extrajudicial killing, aircraft sabotage, hostage taking, or the provision of material support or resources (as defined in section 2339A of title 18) for such an act if such act or provision of material support is engaged in by an official, employee, or agent of such foreign state while acting within the scope of his or her office, employment, or agency.

''(2) CLAIM HEARD.—The court shall hear a claim under this section if—

''(A) the foreign state was designated as a state sponsor of terrorism under section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. App. 2405 (j)) or section 620A of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2371) at the time the act occurred, unless later designated as a result of such act;

''(B) the claimant or the victim was—

''(i) a national of the United States (as that term is defined in section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22));

''(ii) a member of the Armed Forces of the United States (as that term is defined in section 976 of title 10); or

''(iii) otherwise an employee of the government of the United States or one of its contractors acting within the scope of their employment when the act upon which the claim is based occurred; or

''(C) where the act occurred in the foreign state against which the claim has been brought, the claimant has afforded the foreign state a reasonable opportunity to arbitrate the claim in accordance with the accepted international rules of arbitration.

''(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section—

''(1) the terms 'torture' and 'extrajudicial killing' have the meaning given those terms in section 3 of the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991 (28 U.S.C. 1350 note);

''(2) the term 'hostage taking' has the meaning given that term in Article 1 of the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages; and

''(3) the term 'aircraft sabotage' has the meaning given that term in Article 1 of the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation.

''(c) TIME LIMIT.—An action may be brought under this section if the action is commenced not later than the latter of—

''(1) 10 years after April 24, 1996; or

''(2) 10 years from the date on which the cause of action arose.

''(d) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—A private cause of action may be brought against a foreign state designated under section 6(j) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 2405(j)), and any official, employee, or agent of said foreign state while acting within the scope of his or her office, employment, or agency which shall be liable to a national of the United States (as that term is defined in section 101(a)(22) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22)), a member of the Armed Forces of the United States (as that term is defined in section 976 of title 10), or an employee of the government of the United States or one of its contractors acting within the scope of their employment or the legal representative of such a person for personal injury or death caused by acts of that foreign state or its official, employee, or agent for which the courts of the United States may maintain jurisdiction under this section for money damages which may include economic damages, solatium, pain, and suffering, and punitive damages if the acts were among those described in this section. A foreign state shall be vicariously liable for the actions of its officials, employees, or agents.

''(e) ADDITIONAL DAMAGES.—After an action has been brought under subsection (d), actions may also be brought for reasonably foreseeable property loss, whether insured or uninsured, third party liability, and life and property insurance policy loss claims.

''(f) SPECIAL MASTERS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The Courts of the United States may from time to time appoint special masters to hear damage claims brought under this section.

''(2) TRANSFER OF FUNDS.—The Attorney General shall transfer, from funds available for the program under sections 1404C of the Victims Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10603c) to the Administrator of the United States District Court in which any case is pending which has been brought pursuant to section 1605(a)(7) such funds as may be required to carry out the Orders of that United States District Court appointing Special Masters in any case under this section. Any amount paid in compensation to any such Special Master shall constitute an item of court costs.

''(g) APPEAL.—In an action brought under this section, appeals from orders not conclusively ending the litigation may only be taken pursuant to section 1292(b) of this title.

''(h) PROPERTY DISPOSITION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In every action filed in a United States district court in which jurisdiction is alleged under this section, the filing of a notice of pending action pursuant to this section, to which is attached a copy of the complaint filed in the action, shall have the effect of establishing a lien of lis pendens upon any real property or tangible personal property located within that judicial district that is titled in the name of any defendant, or titled in the name of any entity controlled by any such defendant if such notice contains a statement listing those controlled entities.

''(2) NOTICE.—A notice of pending action pursuant to this section shall be filed by the clerk of the district court in the same manner as any pending action and shall be indexed by listing as defendants all named defendants and all entities listed as controlled by any defendant.

''(3) ENFORCEABILITY.—Liens established by reason of this subsection shall be enforceable as provided in chapter 111 of this title.''.

(2) AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER ANALYSIS.—The chapter analysis for chapter 97 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by inserting after the item for section 1605 the following:

''1605A. Terrorism exception to the jurisdictional immunity of a foreign state.''.

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) PROPERTY.—Section 1610 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) PROPERTY IN CERTAIN ACTIONS.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—The property of a foreign state, or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, against which a judgment is entered under this section, including property that is a separate juridical entity, is subject to execution upon that judgment as provided in this section, regardless of—

''(A) the level of economic control over the property by the government of the foreign state;

''(B) whether the profits of the property go to that government;

''(C) the degree to which officials of that government manage the property or otherwise control its daily affairs;

''(D) whether that government is the sole beneficiary in interest of the property; or

''(E) whether establishing the property as a separate entity would entitle the foreign state to benefits in United States courts while avoiding its obligations.

''(2) UNITED STATES SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY INAPPLICABLE.—Any property of a foreign state, or agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, to which paragraph (1) applies shall not be immune from execution upon a judgment entered under this section because the property is regulated by the United States Government by reason of action taken against that foreign state under the Trading With the Enemy Act or the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.''.

(2) VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT.—Section 1404C(a)(3) of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (42 U.S.C. 10603c(a)(3)) is amended by striking ''December 21, 1988, with respect to which an investigation or'' and inserting ''October 23, 1983, with respect to which an investigation or civil or criminal''.

(3) GENERAL EXCEPTION.—Section 1605 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)—

(i) in paragraph (5)(B), by inserting ''or'' after the semicolon;

(ii) in paragraph (6)(D), by striking ''; or'' and inserting a period; and

(iii) by striking paragraph (7); and

(B) by striking subsections (e) and (f).

(d) APPLICATION TO PENDING CASES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to any claim arising under section 1605A or 1605(g) of title 28, United States Code, as added by this section.

(2) PRIOR ACTIONS.—Any judgment or action brought under section 1605(a)(7) of title 28, United States Code, or section 101(c) of Public Law 104-208 after the effective date of such provisions relying on either of these provisions as creating a cause of action, which has been adversely affected on the grounds that either or both of these provisions fail to create a cause of action opposable against the state, and which is still before the courts in any form, including appeal or motion under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 60(b), shall, on motion made to the Federal District Court where the judgment or action was initially entered, be given effect as if it had originally been filed pursuant to section 1605A(d) of title 28, United States Code. The defenses of res judicata, collateral estoppel and limitation period are waived in any re-filed action described in this paragraph and based on the such claim. Any such motion or re-filing must be made not later than 60 days after enactment of this Act.

SA 2252. Mr. DURBIN proposed an amendment to amendment SA 2241 proposed by Mr. MCCONNELL to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; as follows:

At the end of the amendment add the following:

This section shall take effect one day after the bill's enactment.

SA 2253. Mr. GRASSLEY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. ___. EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY CONFIRMATION PILOT PROGRAMS.

(a) REQUIRING FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BASIC PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 402(e)(1)(A) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (8 U.S.C. 1324a note) is amended to read as follows:

''(A) EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—Each department and agency of the Federal Government—

''(i) shall participate in the basic pilot program described in section 403(a);

''(ii) shall comply with the terms and conditions of such program.''.

(b) REQUIRING DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACTORS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BASIC PILOT PROGRAM.—Section 402(e)(1) of such Act, as amended by subsection (a), is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(C) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACTORS.—The following entities shall participate in the basic pilot program described in section 403(a) and shall comply with the terms and conditions of such program:

''(i) A contractor who has entered into a contract with the Department of Defense to which section 2(b)(1) of the Service Contract Act of 1965 (41 U.S.C. 351(b)(1)) applies, and any subcontractor under such contract.

''(ii) A contractor who has entered into a contract with the Department of Defense that is exempted from the application of such Act by section 6 of such Act (41 U.S.C. 356), and any subcontractor under such contract.''.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SA 2254. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title III, add the following:

SEC. 358. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT ON PHYSICAL SECURITY OF DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS.

(a) REPORT.—Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall submit to Congress a report on the physical security of Department of Defense installations and resources.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An analysis of the progress in implementing requirements under the Physical Security Program as set forth in the Department of Defense Instruction 5200.08–R, Chapter 2 (C.2) and Chapter 3, Section 3: Installation Access (C3.3), which mandates the policies and minimum standards for the physical security of Department of Defense installations and resources.

(2) Recommendations based on the findings of the Comptroller General of the United States in the report required by section 344 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109–366; 120 Stat. 2155).

(3) Recommendations based on the lessons learned from the thwarted plot to attack Fort Dix, New Jersey, in 2007.

SA 2255. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1070. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON EQUIPMENT FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD TO DEFEND THE HOMELAND.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Army National Guard and Air National Guard have played an increasing role in homeland security and a critical role in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

(2) As a result of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army National Guard and Air National Guard face significant equipment shortfalls.

(3) The National Guard Bureau, in its February 26, 2007, report entitled ''National Guard Equipment Requirements'', outlines the ''Essential 10'' equipment needs to support the Army National Guard and Air National Guard in the performance of their domestic missions.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Army National Guard and Air National Guard should have sufficient equipment available to accomplish their missions inside the United States and to protect the homeland.

SA 2256. Mr. MENENDEZ submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title V, add the following:

SEC. 594. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON PROGRAM ON FACILITATION OF TRANSITION OF MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES TO RECEIPT OF VETERANS HEALTH CARE BENEFITS AFTER COMPLETION OF MILITARY SERVICE.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs should, in developing the comprehensive policy required by section 1611 as added by Senate amendment 2019, consider establishing a program that utilizes eligible entities to assist members of the Armed Forces, particularly members described in subsection (b), in applying for and receiving health care benefits and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs and otherwise after completion of military service in order to ensure that such members receive a continuity of care and assistance in and after the transition from military service to civilian life.

(b) TARGET POPULATIONS.—Members described in this subsection are all members of the Armed Forces, particularly the following:

(1) Members with serious wounds or injuries.

(2) Members with mental disorders.

(3) Women members.

(4) Members of the National Guard and the Reserves.

(c) VETERAN NAVIGATOR.—The program described in subsection (a) should include a requirement that eligible entities provide assistance under the program through qualified individuals who provide such assistance on an individualized basis to members of the Armed Forces described in subsection (a) as they transition from military service to civilian life and during the commencement of their receipt of health care benefits and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs and otherwise. An individual providing such assistance would be referred to as a ''veteran navigator''.

(d) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES DEFINED.—In this section, the term '' eligible entity'' means any entity or organization that—

(1) is independent of the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs; and

(2) has or can acquire the capacity, including appropriate personnel, to provide assistance under the pilot program described in this section.

SA 2257. Mr. CORNYN (for himself and Mrs. DOLE) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of section 1043, insert the following:

(f) FOCUS ON IMPROVING INTERAGENCY COOPERATION IN POST-CONFLICT CONTINGENCY RELIEF AND RECONSTRUCTION OPERATIONS.—

(1) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(A) The interagency coordination and integration of the United States Government for the planning and execution of overseas post-conflict contingency relief and reconstruction operations requires reform.

(B) Recent operations, most notably in Iraq, lacked the necessary consistent and effective interagency coordination and integration in planning and execution.

(C) Although the unique circumstances associated with the Iraq reconstruction effort are partly responsible for this weak coordination, existing structural weaknesses within the planning and execution processes for such operations indicate that the problems encountered in the Iraq program could recur in future operations unless action is taken to reform and improve interdepartmental integration in planning and execution.

(D) The agencies involved in the Iraq program have attempted to adapt to the relentless demands of the reconstruction effort,

but more substantive and permanent reforms are required for the United States Government to be optimally prepared for future operations.

(E) The fresh body of evidence developed from the Iraq relief and reconstruction experience provides a good basis and timely opportunity to pursue meaningful improvements within and among the departments charged with managing the planning and execution of such operations.

(F) The success achieved in departmental integration of overseas conflict management through the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (Public Law 99–433; 100 Stat. 992) provides precedent for Congress to consider legislation designed to promote increased cooperation and integration among the primary Federal departments and agencies charged with managing post-conflict contingency reconstruction and relief operations.

(2) INCLUSION IN STUDY.—The study conducted under subsection (a) shall include the following elements:

(A) A synthesis of past studies evaluating the successes and failures of previous interagency efforts at planning and executing post-conflict contingency relief and reconstruction operations, including relief and reconstruction operations in Iraq.

(B) An analysis of the division of duties, responsibilities, and functions among executive branch agencies for such operations and recommendations for administrative and regulatory changes to enhance integration.

(C) Recommendations for legislation that would improve interagency cooperation and integration and the efficiency of the United States Government in the planning and execution of such operations.

(D) Recommendations for improvements in congressional, executive, and other oversight structures and procedures that would enhance accountability within such operations.

SA 2258. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title X, add the following:

SEC. 1031. ADDITIONAL WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION CIVIL SUPPORT TEAMS.

Section 1403(a) of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003 (Public Law 107–314; 116 Stat. 2676; 10 U.S.C. 12310 note) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) by striking ''23'' and inserting ''24''; and

(B) by striking ''55'' and inserting ''56''; and

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''55'' and inserting ''56''.

SA 2259. Mr. CORNYN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle B of title II, add the following:

SEC. 214. AMOUNT FOR FLASHLIGHT SOLDIER COMBAT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM.

(a) INCREASE IN AMOUNT FOR RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, TEST AND EVALUATION, DEFENSE-WIDE.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(4) for research, development, test, and evaluation for Defense-wide activities is hereby increased by $1,000,000.

(b) AVAILABILITY FOR FLASHLIGHT COMBAT IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated by section 201(4) for research development, test, and evaluation for Defense-wide activities, as increased by subsection (a), the amount available for Special Operations Technology Development may be increased by $1,000,000, with the amount of the increase to be available for the Flashlight Combat Identification System (FSCIS).

(c) OFFSET.—The amount authorized to be appropriated by section 301(5) for operation and maintenance for Defense-wide activities is hereby reduced by $1,000,000.

SA 2260. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XV, add the following:

SEC. 1535. FIRE SCOUT CLASS IV VERTICAL TAKEOFF UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Army has purchased MQ–8B Fire Scout Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to satisfy the requirement for Class IV unmanned aerial vehicles under its Future Combat Systems program.

(2) The MQ–8B Fire Scout Class IV Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is based on the highly successful RQ–8A Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicle System developed for the Navy, and is currently in test and evaluation having successfully completed more than 200 test flights since May 2002.

(3) Production of at least six Army MQ–8B Fire Scout Class IV Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicles has been completed, and final flight testing has been delayed until 2010.

(4) The United States Central Command has an urgent requirement for persistent command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems in support of ongoing operations.

(5) There are at least six Army MQ–8B Fire Scout Class IV Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicle aircraft available today that could be outfitted with appropriate sensors and deployed to rapidly satisfy the requirements of the United States Central Command.

(b) PROGRAM REQUIRED.—The Secretary of Defense shall take appropriate actions to field not less than six existing Army Fire Scout Class IV Vertical Takeoff Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, with appropriate sensors and communications capabilities and requisite ground control stations, for deployment to the United States Central Command area of operations by not later than February 2008.

(c) FUNDING.—Amounts authorized to be appropriated by this title may be available for procurement for purposes of subsection (b).

(d) REPORT.—Not later than December 1, 2007, the Secretary of the Army shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report describing the progress made toward meeting the requirements of subsection (b).

SA 2261. Mr. INHOFE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 673. EXTENSION OF PERIOD OF ENTITLEMENT TO EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE SELECTED RESERVE AFFECTED BY FORCE SHAPING INITIATIVES.

Section 16133(b)(1)(B) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''or the period beginning on October 1, 2007, and ending on September 30, 2014,'' after ''December 31, 2001,''.

SA 2262. Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mr. BUNNING) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XXXI, add the following:

SEC. 3126. MODIFICATION OF SUNSET DATE OF THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN OF THE ENERGY EMPLOYEES OCCUPATIONAL ILLNESS COMPENSATION PROGRAM.

Section 3686(g) of the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 7385s-15(g)) is amended by striking ''on the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this section'' and inserting ''October 28, 2012''.

SA 2263. Mr. PRYOR submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle H of title V, add the following:

SEC. 594. ENHANCEMENT OF REST AND RECUPERATION LEAVE.

Section 705(b)(2) of title 10, United States Code, is amended by inserting ''for members whose qualifying tour of duty is 12 months or less, or for not more than 20 days for members whose qualifying tour of duty is longer than 12 months,'' after ''for not more than 15 days''.

SA 2264. Mr. LOTT submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by

him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XIV, add the following:

SEC. 1422. ADMINISTRATION AND OVERSIGHT OF THE ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME.

(a) INDEPENDENCE AND PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT HOME.—Section 1511 of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 (24 U.S.C. 411) is amended——

(1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the following: ''However, the Retirement Home shall be treated as a military facility of the Department of Defense, and may not be privatized. The administration of the Retirement Home (including administration for the provision of health care and medical care for residents) shall remain under the direct authority, control, and administration of the Secretary of Defense.''; and

(2) by striking subsection (g) and inserting the following new subsection (g):

''(g) ACCREDITATION.—The Chief Operating Officer shall secure and maintain accreditation by a nationally recognized civilian accrediting organization for each aspect of each facility of the Retirement Home, including medical and dental care, pharmacy, independent living, and assisted living and nursing care.''.

(b) SPECTRUM OF CARE.—Section 1513(b) of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 (24 U.S.C. 413(b)) is amended by inserting after the first sentence the following new sentence: ''The services provided residents of the Retirement Home shall include appropriate nonacute medical and dental services, pharmaceutical services, and transportation of residents, at no cost to residents, to acute medical and dental services and after-hours routine medical care''.

(e) CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER.—The Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 is further amended by inserting after section 1515 the following new section:

''SEC. 1515A. CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER.

''(a) APPOINTMENT.—(1) The Secretary of Defense shall appoint the Chief Medical Officer of the Retirement Home. The Secretary of Defense shall make the appointment in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security.

''(2) The Chief Medical Officer shall serve a term of two years, but is removable from office during such term at the pleasure of the Secretary.

''(3) The Secretary (or the designee of the Secretary) shall evaluate the performance of the Chief Medical Officer not less frequently than once each year. The Secretary shall carry out such evaluation in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer and the Local Board for each facility of the Retirement Home.

''(4) An officer appointed as Chief Medical Officer of the Retirement Home shall serve as Chief Medical Officer without vacating any other military duties and responsibilities assigned to that officer whether at the time of appointment or afterward.

''(b) QUALIFICATIONS.—(1) To qualify for appointment as the Chief Medical Officer, a person shall be a member of the Medical, Dental, Nurse, or Medical Services Corps of the Armed Forces, including the Health and Safety Directorate of the Coast Guard, serving on active duty in the grade of brigadier general, or in the case of the Navy or the Coast Guard rear admiral (lower half), or higher.

''(2) In making appointments of the Chief Medical Officer, the Secretary of Defense shall, to the extent practicable, provide for the rotation of the appointments among the various Armed Forces and the Health and Safety Directorate of the Coast Guard.

''(c) RESPONSIBILITIES.—(1) The Chief Medical Officer shall be responsible to the Secretary, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Chief Operating Officer for the direction and oversight of the provision of medical, mental health, and dental care at each facility of the Retirement Home.

''(2) The Chief Medical Officer shall advise the Secretary, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Local Board for each facility of the Retirement Home on all medical and medical administrative matters of the Retirement Home.

''(d) DUTIES.—In carrying out the responsibilities set forth in subsection (c), the Chief Medical Officer shall perform the following duties:

''(1) Ensure the timely availability to residents of the Retirement Home, at locations other than the Retirement Home, of such acute medical, mental health, and dental care as such resident may require that is not available at the applicable facility of the Retirement Home.

''(2) Ensure compliance by the facilities of the Retirement Home with accreditation standards, applicable health care standards of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and any other applicable health care standards and requirements (including requirements identified in applicable reports of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense).

''(3) Periodically visit and inspect the medical facilities and medical operations of each facility of the Retirement Home.

''(4) Periodically examine and audit the medical records and administration of the Retirement Home.

''(5) Consult with the Local Board for each facility of the Retirement Home not less frequently than once each year.

''(e) ADVISORY BODIES.—In carrying out the responsibilities set forth in subsection (c) and the duties set forth in subsection (d), the Chief Medical Officer may establish and seek the advice of such advisory bodies as the Chief Medical Officer considers appropriate.''.

(f) LOCAL BOARDS OF TRUSTEES.——

(1) DUTIES.—Subsection (b) of section 1516 of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 (24 U.S.C. 416) is amended to read as follows:

''(b) DUTIES.—(1) The Local Board for a facility shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Director of the facility and to the Chief Operating Officer.

''(2) The Local Board for a facility shall provide to the Chief Operating Officer and the Director of the facility such guidance and recommendations on the administration of the facility as the Local Board considers appropriate.

''(3) The Local Board for a facility shall provide to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness not less often than annually an assessment of all aspects of the facility, including the quality of care at the facility.

''(4) Not less frequently than once each year, the Local Board for a facility shall submit to Congress a report that includes an assessment of all aspects of the facility, including the quality of care at the facility.''.

(2) COMPOSITION.—Subparagraph (K) of subsection (c) of such section is amended to read as follows:

''(K) One senior representative of one of the chief personnel officers of the Armed Forces, who shall be a member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty in the grade of brigadier general, or in the case of the Navy or Coast Guard, rear admiral (lower half).''.

(h) INSPECTION OF RETIREMENT HOME.—Section 1518 of such Act (24 U.S.C. 418) is amended to read as follows:

''SEC. 1518. INSPECTION OF RETIREMENT HOME.

''(a) INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.—(1) The Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall have the duty to inspect the Retirement Home.

''(2) The Inspector General shall advise the Secretary of Defense and the Director of each facility of the Retirement Home on matters relating to waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement of the Retirement Home.

''(b) INSPECTIONS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—(1) Every two years, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense shall perform a comprehensive inspection of all aspects of each facility of the Retirement Home, including independent living, assisted living, medical and dental care, pharmacy, financial and contracting records, and any aspect of either facility on which the Local Board for the facility or the resident advisory committee or council of the facility recommends inspection.

''(2) The Inspector General may be assisted in inspections under this subsection by a medical inspector general of a military department designated for purposes of this subsection by the Secretary of Defense.

''(3) In conducting the inspection of a facility of the Retirement Home under this subsection, the Inspector General shall solicit concerns, observations, and recommendations from the Local Board for the facility, the resident advisory committee or council of the facility, and the residents of the facility. Any concerns, observations, and recommendations solicited from residents shall be solicited on a not-for-attribution basis.

''(4) The Chief Operating Officer and the Director of each facility of the Retirement Home shall make all staff, other personnel, and records of each facility available to the Inspector General in a timely manner for purposes of inspections under this subsection.

''(c) REPORTS ON INSPECTIONS BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.—(1) Not later than 45 days after completing an inspection of a facility of the Retirement Home under subsection (b), the Inspector General shall submit to the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Chief Operating Officer, the Director of the facility, and the Local Board for the facility, and to Congress, a report describing the results of the inspection and containing such recommendations as the Inspector General considers appropriate in light of the inspection.

''(2) Not later than 45 days after receiving a report of the Inspector General under paragraph (1), the Director of the facility concerned shall submit the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Local Board for the facility, and to Congress, a plan to address the recommendations and other matters set forth in the report.

''(d) ADDITIONAL INSPECTIONS.—(1) Every two years, in a year in which the Inspector General does not perform an inspection under subsection (b), the Chief Operating Officer shall request the inspection of each facility of the Retirement Home by a nationally recognized civilian accrediting organization in accordance with Section 1422(a) of this amendment.

''(2) The Chief Operating Officer and the Director of a facility being inspected under this subsection shall make all staff, other personnel, and records of the facility available to the civilian accrediting organization

in a timely manner for purposes of inspections under this subsection.

''(e) REPORTS ON ADDITIONAL INSPECTIONS.—(1) Not later than 45 days after receiving a report of an inspection from the civilian accrediting organization under subsection (d), the Director of the facility concerned shall submit to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Local Board for the facility a report containing——

''(A) the results of the inspection; and

''(B) a plan to address any recommendations and other matters set forth in the report.

''(2) Not later than 45 days after receiving a report and plan under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Defense shall submit the report and plan to Congress.''.

(i) ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME TRUST FUND.—Section 1519 of the Armed Forces Retirement Home Act of 1991 (24 U.S.C. 419) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(d) REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—The Chief Financial Officer of the Armed Forces Retirement Home shall comply with the reporting requirements of subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 31, United States Code.''.

SA 2265. Mr. LEVIN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

On page 299, line 7, strike ''fifth fiscal year'' and insert ''fourth fiscal year''.

On page 299, line 9, strike ''fifth fiscal year'' and insert ''fourth fiscal year''.

Beginning on page 486, strike line 7 and all that follows through page 487, line 5, and insert the following:

(A) by striking ''(1)'' and inserting ''(1)(A)''; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(B)(i) Subject to clause (ii), the maximum lease amounts for the 350 units in subparagraph (A) may be waived and increased up to a maximum of $60,000 per unit per year.

''(ii) The Secretary concerned may not exercise the waiver authority under clause (i) until the Secretary has notified the congressional defense committees of such proposed waiver and the reasons therefor and a period of 21 days has elapsed or, if over sooner, 14 days after such notice is provided in an electronic medium pursuant to section 480 of this title.'';

(2) in paragraph (2), by striking ''the Secretary of the Navy may lease not more than 2,800 units of family housing in Italy, and the Secretary of the Army may lease not more than 500 units of family housing in Italy'' and inserting ''the Secretaries of the military departments may lease not more than 3,300 units of family housing in Italy'';

(3) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4) and redesignating paragraphs (5) and (6) as paragraphs (3) and (5), respectively;

(4) in paragraph (3), as redesignated by paragraph (4) of this subsection, by striking ''paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4)'' and inserting ''paragraphs (1) and (2)''; and

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

''(4) In addition to the 450 units of family housing referred to in paragraph (1) for which the maximum lease amount is $25,000 per unit per year, the Secretary of the Army may lease not more than 3,975 units of family housing in Korea subject to a maximum lease amount of $46,000 per unit per year. That maximum lease amount shall be adjusted for foreign currency fluctuations and inflation from October 1, 2007.''.

SA 2266. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. ISAKSON, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle F of title VI, add the following:

SEC. 683. NATIONAL GUARD YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Defense shall establish a national combat veteran reintegration program to provide National Guard and Reserve members and their families with sufficient information, services, referral, and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the entire deployment cycle. This program shall be known as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

(b) PURPOSE.—The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program shall consist of informational events and activities for Reserve Component members, their families, and community members through the four phases of the deployment cycle:

(1) Pre-Deployment.

(2) Deployment.

(3) Demobilization.

(4) Post-Deployment-Reconstitution.

(d) ORGANIZATION.—

(1) EXECUTIVE AGENT.—The Secretary shall designate the OSD (P&R) as the Department of Defense executive agent for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program.

(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE FOR REINTEGRATION PROGRAMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The OSD (P&R) shall establish the Office for Reintegration Programs within the OSD. The office shall administer all reintegration programs in coordination with State National Guard organizations. The office shall be responsible for coordination with existing National Guard and Reserve family and support programs. The Directors of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard and the Chiefs of the Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve and Air Force Reserve may appoint liaison officers to coordinate with the permanent office staff.

(B) ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN REINTEGRATION.—The Office for Reintegration Programs shall establish a Center for Excellence in Reintegration within the office. The Center shall collect and analyze ''lessons learned'' and suggestions from State National Guard and Reserve organizations with existing or developing reintegration programs. The Center shall also assist in developing training aids and briefing materials and training representatives from State National Guard and Reserve organizations.

(3) ADVISORY BOARD.—

(A) APPOINTMENT.—The Under Secretary of Defense shall appoint an advisory board to analyze and report areas of success and areas for necessary improvements. The advisory board shall include, but is not limited to, the Director of the Army National Guard, the Director of the Air National Guard, Chiefs of the Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve and Air Force Reserve, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, an Adjutant General on a rotational basis as determined by the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and any other Department of Defense, Federal Government agency, or outside organization as determined by the Secretary of Defense. The members of the advisory board may designate representatives in their stead.

(B) SCHEDULE.—The advisory board shall meet on a schedule as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

(C) INITIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—The advisory board shall issue internal reports as necessary and shall submit an initial report to the Committees on Armed Services not later than 180 days after the end of a one-year period from establishment of the Office for Reintegration Programs. This report shall contain—

(i) an evaluation of the reintegration program's implementation by State National Guard and Reserve organizations;

(ii) an assessment of any unmet resource requirements;

(iii) recommendations regarding closer coordination between the Office of Reintegration Programs and State National Guard and Reserve organizations.

(D) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The advisory board shall submit annual reports to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives following the initial report by the first week in March of subsequent years following the initial report.

(e) PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office for Reintegration Programs shall analyze the demographics, placement of State Family Assistance Centers (FAC), and FAC resources before a mobilization alert is issued to affected State National Guard and Reserve organizations. The Office of Reintegration Programs shall consult with affected State National Guard and Reserve organizations following the issuance of a mobilization alert and implement the reintegration events in accordance with the Reintegration Program phase model.

(2) PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE.—The Pre-Deployment Phase shall constitute the time from first notification of mobilization until deployment of the mobilized National Guard or Reserve unit. Events and activities shall focus on providing education and ensuring the readiness of service members, families, and communities for the rigors of a combat deployment.

(3) DEPLOYMENT PHASE.—The Deployment Phase shall constitute the period from deployment of the mobilized National Guard or Reserve unit until the unit arrives at a demobilization station inside the continental United States. Events and services provided shall focus on the challenges and stress associated with separation and having a member in a combat zone. Information sessions shall utilize State National Guard and Reserve resources in coordination with the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve Office, Transition Assistance Advisors, and the State Family Programs Director.

(4) DEMOBILIZATION PHASE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Demobilization Phase shall constitute the period from arrival of the National Guard or Reserve unit at the demobilization station until its departure for home station. In the interest of returning members as soon as possible to their home stations, reintegration briefings during the Demobilization Phase shall be minimized. State Deployment Cycle Support Teams are encouraged, however, to assist demobilizing members in enrolling in the Department of Veterans Affairs system using Form 1010EZ during the Demobilization Phase. State Deployment Cycle Support

Teams may provide other events from the Initial Reintegration Activity as determined by the State National Guard or Reserve organizations. Remaining events shall be conducted during the Post-Deployment-Reconstitution Phase.

(B) INITIAL REINTEGRATION ACTIVITY.—The purpose of this reintegration program is to educate service members about the resources that are available to them and to connect members to service providers who can assist them in overcoming the challenges of reintegration.

(5) POST-DEPLOYMENT-RECONSTITUTION PHASE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Post-Deployment-Reconstitution Phase shall constitute the period from arrival at home station until 180 days following demobilization. Activities and services provided shall focus on reconnecting service members with their families and communities and providing resources and information necessary for successful reintegration. Reintegration events shall begin with elements of the Initial Reintegration Activity program that were not completed during the Demobilization Phase.

(B) 30-DAY, 60-DAY, AND 90-DAY REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES.—The State National Guard and Reserve organizations shall hold reintegration activities at the 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day interval following demobilization. These activities shall focus on reconnecting service members and family members with the service providers from Initial Reintegration Activity to ensure service members and their families understand what benefits they are entitled to and what resources are available to help them overcome the challenges of reintegration. The Reintegration Activities shall also provide a forum for service members and families to address negative behaviors related to combat stress and transition.

(C) SERVICE MEMBER PAY.—Service members shall receive appropriate pay for days spent attending the Reintegration Activities at the 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day intervals.

(D) MONTHLY INDIVIDUAL REINTEGRATION PROGRAM.—The Office for Reintegration Programs, in coordination with State National Guard and Reserve organizations, shall offer a monthly reintegration program for individual service members released from active duty or formerly in a medical hold status. The program shall focus on the special needs of this service member subset and the Office for Reintegration Programs shall develop an appropriate program of services and information.

SA 2267. Mr. CHAMBLISS (for himself and Mr. ISAKSON) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title VII, add the following:

SEC. 703. SENSE OF SENATE ON COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ON HEALTH CARE FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Senate makes the following findings:

(1) There have been recent collaborations between the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the civilian medical community for purposes of providing high quality medical care to America's wounded warriors. One such collaboration is occurring in Augusta, Georgia, between the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon, the Augusta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the Medical College of Georgia, and local health care providers under the TRICARE program.

(2) Medical staff from the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center and the Augusta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center have been meeting weekly to discuss future patient cases for the Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit (ADRU) within the Uptown Department of Veterans Affairs facility. The Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit is the only rehabilitation unit in the Department of Veterans Affairs system for members of the Armed Forces on active duty.

(3) As of January 2007, 431 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have received rehabilitation services at the Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit, and 26 percent of those treated have returned to active duty in the Armed Forces.

(4) The Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center and the Augusta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center have combined their neurosurgery programs and have coordinated on critical brain injury and psychiatric care.

(5) The Department of Defense, the Army, and the Army Medical Command have recognized the need for expanded behavioral health care services for members of the Armed Forces returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. These services are currently being provided by the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center.

(b) SENSE OF SENATE.—It is the sense of the Senate that the Department of Defense should encourage continuing collaboration between the Army and the Department of Veterans Affairs in treating America's wounded warriors and, when appropriate and available, provide additional support and resources for the development of such collaborations, including the current collaboration between the Active Duty Rehabilitation Unit at the Augusta Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Georgia, and the behavioral health care services program at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center, Fort Gordon, Georgia.

SA 2268. Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. INOUYE, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BIDEN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. REED, Mr. LIEBERMAN, and Ms. COLLINS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title V, add the following:

SEC. 555. NURSE MATTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense may provide for the carrying out of each of the programs described in subsections (b) through (f).

(b) SERVICE OF NURSE OFFICERS AS FACULTY IN EXCHANGE FOR COMMITMENT TO ADDITIONAL SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under this section may be a program in which covered commissioned officers with a graduate degree in nursing or a related field who are in the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned serve a tour of duty of two years as a full-time faculty member of an accredited school of nursing.

(2) COVERED OFFICERS.—A commissioned officer of the nurse corps of the Armed Forces described in this paragraph is a nurse officer on active duty who has served for more than nine years on active duty in the Armed Forces as an officer of the nurse corps at the time of the commencement of the tour of duty described in paragraph (1).

(3) BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES.—An officer serving on the faculty of an accredited school or nursing under this subsection shall be accorded all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities (other than compensation and compensation-related benefits) of any other comparably situated individual serving a full-time faculty member of such school.

(4) AGREEMENT FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICE.—Each officer who serves a tour of duty on the faculty of a school of nursing under this subsection shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary to serve upon the completion of such tour of duty for a period of four years for such tour of duty as a member of the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned. Any service agreed to by an officer under this paragraph is in addition to any other service required of the officer under law.

(c) SERVICE OF NURSE OFFICERS AS FACULTY IN EXCHANGE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NURSE OFFICER CANDIDATES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under this section may be a program in which commissioned officers with a graduate degree in nursing or a related field who are in the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned serve while on active duty a tour of duty of two years as a full-time faculty member of an accredited school of nursing.

(2) BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES.—An officer serving on the faculty of an accredited school of nursing under this subsection shall be accorded all the benefits, privileges, and responsibilities (other than compensation and compensation-related benefits) of any other comparably situated individual serving as a full-time faculty member of such school.

(3) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NURSE OFFICER CANDIDATES.—(A) Each accredited school of nursing at which an officer serves on the faculty under this subsection shall provide scholarships to individuals undertaking an educational program at such school leading to a degree in nursing who agree, upon completion of such program, to accept a commission as an officer in the nurse corps of the Armed Forces.

(B) The total amount of funds made available for scholarships by an accredited school of nursing under subparagraph (A) for each officer serving on the faculty of that school under this subsection shall be not less than the amount equal to an entry-level full-time faculty member of that school for each year that such officer so serves on the faculty of that school.

(C) The total number of scholarships provided by an accredited school of nursing under subparagraph (A) for each officer serving on the faculty of that school under this subsection shall be such number as the Secretary of Defense shall specify for purposes of this subsection.

(d) SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CERTAIN NURSE OFFICERS FOR EDUCATION AS NURSES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under this section may be a program in which the Secretary provides scholarships to commissioned officers of the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned described in paragraph (2) who enter into an agreement described in paragraph (4) for the participation of such officers in an educational program of an accredited school of nursing leading to a graduate degree in nursing.

(2) COVERED NURSE OFFICERS.—A commissioned officer of the nurse corps of the Armed Forces described in this paragraph is a nurse officer who has served not less than 20 years on active duty in the Armed Forces and is otherwise eligible for retirement from the Armed Forces.

(3) SCOPE OF SCHOLARSHIPS.—Amounts in a scholarship provided a nurse officer under this subsection may be utilized by the officer to pay the costs of tuition, fees, and other educational expenses of the officer in participating in an educational program described in paragraph (1).

(4) AGREEMENT.—An agreement of a nurse officer described in this paragraph is the agreement of the officer—

(A) to participate in an educational program described in paragraph (1); and

(B) upon graduation from such educational program—

(i) to serve not less than two years as a full-time faculty member of an accredited school of nursing; and

(ii) to undertake such activities as the Secretary considers appropriate to encourage current and prospective nurses to pursue service in the nurse corps of the Armed Forces.

(e) TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR RETIRING NURSE OFFICERS QUALIFIED AS FACULTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under this section may be a program in which the Secretary provides to commissioned officers of the nurse corps of the Armed Force concerned described in paragraph (2) the assistance described in paragraph (3) to assist such officers in obtaining and fulfilling positions as full-time faculty members of an accredited school of nursing after retirement from the Armed Forces.

(2) COVERED NURSE OFFICERS.—A commissioned officer of the nurse corps of the Armed Forces described in this paragraph is a nurse officer who—

(A) has served an aggregate of at least 20 years on active duty or in reserve active status in the Armed Forces;

(B) is eligible for retirement from the Armed Forces; and

(C) possesses a doctoral or master degree in nursing or a related field which qualifies the nurse officer to discharge the position of nurse instructor at an accredited school of nursing.

(3) ASSISTANCE.—The assistance described in this paragraph is assistance as follows:

(A) Career placement assistance.

(B) Continuing education.

(C) Stipends (in an amount specified by the Secretary).

(4) AGREEMENT.—A nurse officer provided assistance under this subsection shall enter into an agreement with the Secretary to serve as a full-time faculty member of an accredited school of nursing for such period as the Secretary shall provide in the agreement.

(f) BENEFITS FOR RETIRED NURSE OFFICERS ACCEPTING APPOINTMENT AS FACULTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—One of the programs under this section may be a program in which the Secretary provides to any individual described in paragraph (2) the benefits specified in paragraph (3).

(2) COVERED INDIVIDUALS.—An individual described in this paragraph is an individual who—

(A) is retired from the Armed Forces after service as a commissioned officer in the nurse corps of the Armed Forces;

(B) holds a graduate degree in nursing; and

(C) serves as a full-time faculty member of an accredited school of nursing.

(3) BENEFITS.—The benefits specified in this paragraph shall include the following:

(A) Payment of retired or retirement pay without reduction based on receipt of pay or other compensation from the institution of higher education concerned.

(B) Payment by the institution of higher education concerned of a salary and other compensation to which other similarly situated faculty members of the institution of higher education would be entitled.

(C) If the amount of pay and other compensation payable by the institution of higher education concerned for service as an associate full-time faculty member is less than the basic pay to which the individual was entitled immediately before retirement from the Armed Forces, payment of an amount equal to the difference between such basic pay and such payment and other compensation.

(g) ADMINISTRATION AND DURATION OF PROGRAMS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish requirements and procedures for the administration of the programs authorized by this section. Such requirements and procedures shall include procedures for selecting participating schools of nursing.

(2) DURATION.—Any program carried out under this section shall continue for not less than two years.

(3) ASSESSMENT.—Not later than two years after commencing any program under this section, the Secretary shall assess the results of such program and determine whether or not to continue such program. The assessment of any program shall be based on measurable criteria, information concerning results, and such other matters as the Secretary considers appropriate.

(4) CONTINUATION.—The Secretary may continue carrying out any program under this section that the Secretary determines, pursuant to an assessment under paragraph (3), to continue to carry out. In continuing to carry out a program, the Secretary may modify the terms of the program within the scope of this section. The continuation of any program may include its expansion to include additional participating schools of nursing.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the terms ''school of nursing'' and ''accredited'' have the meaning given those terms in section 801 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 296).

SA 2269. Mr. REED (for Mrs. CLINTON) proposed an amendment to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 27, supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Purple Heart Recognition Day''; as follows:

On page 2 line 8 strike ''requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on'' and insert ''calls upon''.

NOTICE OF HEARING

Mr. KERRY. I would like to inform Members that the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship will hold a hearing entitled ''Increasing Government Accountability and Ensuring Fairness in Small Business Contracting,'' on Wednesday, July 18, 2007, at 2:00 p.m. in room 428A of the Russell Senate Office Building.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Nikhil Sahai and Lauren Hughes of my staff be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, pursuant to Executive Order 12131, as amended, reappoints the following Member to the President's Export Council: the Honorable MIKE ENZI of Wyoming.

NATIONAL PURPLE HEART RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Armed Services Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 27 and that the Senate then proceed to its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 27) supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Purple Heart Recognition Day.''

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk be considered and agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2269) was agreed to, as follows:

On page 2 line 8 strike ''requests that the President issue a proclamation calling on'' and insert ''calls upon''.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 27), as amended, was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, as amended, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 27

Whereas the Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration in the world in present use;

Whereas the Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to members of the Armed Forces who are wounded in a conflict with an enemy force or are wounded while held by an enemy force as prisoners of war, and is awarded posthumously to the next of kin of members of the Armed Forces who are killed in a conflict with an enemy force or who die of wounds received in a conflict with an enemy force;

Whereas the Purple Heart was established on August 7, 1782, during the Revolutionary War, when General George Washington issued an order establishing the Honorary Badge of Distinction, otherwise known as the Badge of Military Merit;

Whereas the award of the Purple Heart ceased with the end of the Revolutionary War, but was revived in 1932, the 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth, out of respect for his memory and military achievements; and

Whereas observing National Purple Heart Recognition Day is a fitting tribute to George Washington and to the more than 1,535,000 recipients of the Purple Heart, approximately 550,000 of whom are still living: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of ''National Purple Heart Recognition Day'';

(2) encourages all people in the United States to learn about the history of the Purple Heart and to honor its recipients; and

(3) calls upon the people of the United States to conduct appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs to demonstrate support for members of the Armed Forces who have been awarded the Purple Heart.

COMMENDING THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Con. Res. 41 submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 41) commending the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. REED. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 41) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 41

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard, known as the Red Bull Division, is headquartered in Bloomington, Minnesota, and is made up of some 3,700 hard-working and courageous Minnesotans and some 1,300 more soldiers from other Midwestern States;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team has a long history of service to the United States, beginning with the Civil War;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team was most recently mobilized in September 2005 and departed for Iraq in March 2006;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team recently completed the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas during its deployment, the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2,400,000 convoy miles, and discovered 462 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) prior to detonation;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team processed over 1,500,000 million vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without any insurgent penetrations;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team captured over 400 suspected insurgents;

Whereas more than 1,400 members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team reenlisted during deployment and 21 members became United States citizens during deployment;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team helped start 2 Iraqi newspapers that provide news to the local population and publish stories on reconstruction progress;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 137 reconstruction projects;

Whereas the deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team in Iraq was extended by 125 days in January 2007;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team and its members are now returning to the United States to loving families and a grateful Nation;

Whereas the families of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team have waited patiently for their loved ones to return and endured many hardships during this lengthy deployment;

Whereas the employers of the soldiers and family members of the 1st Brigade/34th Infantry Division have displayed patriotism over profit by keeping positions saved for the returning soldiers and supporting the families during the difficult days of this long deployment, and these employers of the soldiers and their families are great corporate citizens through their support of our armed forces and their family members;

Whereas communities throughout the Midwest are now integral participants in the Minnesota National Guard's extensive Beyond the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program that will help members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team return to normal life; and

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division has performed admirably and courageously, putting service to country over personal interests and gaining the gratitude and respect of Minnesotans, Midwesterners, and all Americans: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

(2) recognizes the achievements of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team and their exemplary service to the United States; and

(3) directs the Secretary of the Senate to transmit a copy of this resolution to the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard for appropriate display.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2007

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m., Tuesday, July 17; that on Tuesday, following the prayer and pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, and the time for the two leaders reserved for their use later in the day; that there then be a period of morning business for 60 minutes, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the first half under the control of the Republicans and the second half under the control of the majority; that following morning business, the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 1585; that on Tuesday, the Senate recess from 12:30 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. for the respective conference work periods; further that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII with respect to the cloture motions filed today be waived.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REED. Mr. President, if there is no further business today, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:50 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, July 17, 2007, at 10 a.m.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NICHOLAS DAVID FUSTON FOR THE AWARD OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Nicholas David Fuston, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Nicholas has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the years Nicholas has been involved in Scouting, he has earned 31 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions, serving as Patrol Leader, Den Chief, Quartermaster, Librarian, Troop Guide and Senior Patrol Leader. Nicholas is also a Brotherhood Member in the Order of the Arrow and a Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say.

For his Eagle Scout project, Nicholas planned and supervised the reconstruction and enlargement of a shelter by a pond at the Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary in Liberty, Missouri. Nicholas has also attended the National High Adventures Camp, and has earned the 12 Month Camper Award and the 100 Nights Camper Award.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Nicholas David Fuston for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

STATEMENT HONORING THE LIFE OF CLAUDIA TAYLOR ''LADY BIRD'' JOHNSON

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate the life and outstanding works of Claudia Taylor ''Lady Bird'' Johnson, the former First Lady of the United States.

Lady Bird Johnson was born on December 22, 1912, to Thomas Jefferson Taylor and Minnie Lee Patillo. As a child, Lady Bird was a tremendous student who expressed great love for classical literature before going on to earn degrees in art and journalism from the University of Texas in 1933 and 1934. She married Lyndon Baines Johnson on November 17, 1934.

When Lyndon Johnson became the 36th President of the United States, Lady Bird showed groundbreaking leadership in developing new opportunities for our First Ladies. Lady Bird conceptualized and secured congressional support for the Highway Beautification Act, which President Johnson signed into law on October 22, 1965. This important piece of legislation ordered the removal of certain junkyards and overly intrusive advertising along our nation's highways. She also championed the creation and strengthening of the Head Start program, which has helped ensure that all children have access to vital early-childhood education, regardless of their parents' income.

After her time as First Lady, Lady Bird continued to show leadership in the causes dear to her, especially the preservation of our wildlife. In 1970, she published her diaries of her time as First Lady, White House Diary, which detailed her pioneering accomplishments and inspired young women across the country. In 1982, Lady Bird founded the National Wildflower Research Center, which works to expand the sustainable use and conservation of wildflowers and plants. She also served as National Geographic Society trustee emeritus and Kennedy Center Honorary Chair.

As a result of her numerous good works, Lady Bird Johnson earned the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 1988. These honors were well deserved and serve as testament to the exemplary life of Lady Bird Johnson.

Mrs. Johnson's passage yesterday is a tremendous loss for the Johnson family and for our country. It is with great sadness that I pass on my condolences to Lady Bird Johnson's family and friends, but with great pride that I honor her incredible life and accomplishments.

TRIBUTE TO NEW BERLIN, NEW YORK CELEBRATING ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL A. ARCURI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the town of New Berlin in my congressional district in upstate New York. This year, New Berlin is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its founding.

New Berlin has planned a series of events to celebrate its bicentennial, including concerts, parades and reenactments. A folk painting by Jim Parker, which recreates the town's map from 1870, will be unveiled on July 21st.

A community of over 2,800 residents, New Berlin is located on the Unadilla River in Chenango County. There are five hamlets in the town: the Village of New Berlin, South New Berlin, Holmesville, Amblerville and Chenango Lake.

New Berlin enjoys a rich history. The first settler, Daniel Scribner, arrived in 1790, and the town was partitioned from Norwich in 1807. New Berlin is home to Preferred Manor, which was built in 1831 and served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Preferred Manor features one of only two indoor weather vanes in existence. The town has also produced some very accomplished individuals. Anson Burlingame, born in New Berlin, was a Member of Congress from Massachusetts from 1855–1861. He later was an Ambassador and negotiated the treaty between the United States and China. Henry Bennett, another New Berlin native, served in Congress from 1849–1859.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to represent such a historic community still thriving in the twenty-first century. Please join me in congratulating New Berlin on their exciting bicentennial celebration.

JOEL STERLING HUMBLE FOR THE AWARD OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Joel Sterling Humble, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 205, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Joel has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Joel has been involved in scouting, he has earned 39 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions, serving as Assistant Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, Librarian and Scribe.

For his Eagle Scout project, Joel cleared a ¼-mile long fence of overgrown brush and debris at the Blue Springs Cemetery. Joel has earned the highest award offered in the Cubs scout program, the Arrow of Light Award in April 2002.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Joel Sterling Humble for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I regret that I had to return to my district early and missed rollcall vote no. 584 through vote no. 606. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on rollcall vote 584, 596, and 606. I would have voted ''no'' on rollcall vote 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 597, 598, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, and 605.

FREE THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS

SPEECH OF

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 12, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, Israeli soldiers who, as of today, have now been held captive by Hezbollah terrorists for a full year.

On July 12, 2006, a month-long military conflict between Israel and Hezbollah was instigated when the armored humvee Ehud and Eldad were riding in was bombarded by Hezbollah rockets.

Ehud and Eldad were captured during the course of this unprovoked attack and have been held hostage ever since.

In February of this year, I had the pleasure of welcoming Ehud Goldwasser's energetic wife, Karnit, to the U.S. Capitol. She told me how trying it has been to live without the ''the love of her life'' and how her once bright hopes of raising a family with Ehud are now in peril due to the cowardly and illegal acts of a terrorist organization whose only goal is the destruction of her homeland. It is my hope that when I meet with Karnit again in August, Ehud will once again be by her side.

Terrorist acts like the kidnapping of Ehud and Eldad are not military actions between warring nations. They are despicable crimes that tear families apart and shroud entire communities in grief and suffering. As the leader of the free and democratic world, the United States has a responsibility to condemn such attacks whenever and wherever they occur, and to help advance peaceful solutions to ongoing crises whenever they can be reached.

To that end, I stand by Karnit Goldwasser, I stand by Israel, and I stand by like-minded activists throughout the world in calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev—courageous individuals who answered Israel's call to serve and who have sacrificed greatly in fighting for the democratic principles for which our two countries stand.

DIRK PAUL HUDSON FOR THE AWARD OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Dirk Paul Hudson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 249, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Dirk has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Dirk has been involved in scouting, he has earned 40 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions, serving as Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, and Scribe. Dirk is also a member of the Tribe of Mic-O-Say.

For his Eagle Scout project, Dirk constructed a 270-foot walking trail at Green Hills of Platte Wildlife Preserve. His project consisted of preparing the ground for the trail, pruning trees, removing brush, spreading mulch, and lining the trail with rocks.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Dirk Paul Hudson for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD ''DICK'' SMITH

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today I recognize the achievements of one of my constituents, Richard ''Dick'' Smith, who has generously contributed to the preservation and continuance of jazz music and culture. With deepest honor, I am proud to present this tribute to Mr. Smith, a contributor of our American culture.

For the past 8 years, Mr. Smith has diligently worked as music coordinator for Jazz Night located at a Southwest Washington church. The mission of Jazz Night is to present, preserve, document, and perpetuate the original art form of jazz as it has been practiced for over 75 years. Jazz Night provides a venue for local jazz legends and contemporary musicians throughout the D.C. Metropolitan area to perform for people of all ages, experiences and backgrounds.

Mr. Smith dedicates his life to jazz, and his involvement and participation in such programs as Jazz Night reflects his sincerity and devotion to his cause. In collaboration with Jazz Night Mr. Smith works to provide outreach by presenting jazz musicians and hosting jazz performances in community centers, senior citizen facilities and nursing homes. Music education is also provided for young people through a program designed to develop and nurture emerging musicians. This program serves often neglected sectors of our community by supporting and developing the youth. By doing this Mr. Smith hopes to erase as much of the negativity and violence that threatens many communities.

Furthermore, Mr. Smith wishes to bridge the gap between the youth and the jazz tradition by recognizing the youth as a vital part of our jazz community, and by exposing them to music other than hip hop which often saturates their environment.

Mr. Smith has tirelessly and unselfishly devoted his life to the conservation of jazz. He is one of the founding members of Lettum Play, an organization formed in the 1950s that gave musicians a venue to perform. Mr. Smith serves as a mentor to many emerging musicians in the Washington area. Without the incessant efforts of Mr. Smith, D.C. jazz as we know it would cease to exist.

In addition to being a vocalist, the former Washington Redskin is truly a legend in the D.C. area. His mission, to ensure that the history of jazz in Washington, DC is preserved for generations to come, is commendable. As a performer, Mr. Smith has had the privilege to perform with such greats as Shirley Murdock, and notable jazz musicians like the late Keter Betts, Buck Hill and the late Ronnie Wells. For more than 5 years, Mr. Smith was a featured male vocalist for the East Coast Jazz Festival.

Mr. Smith has spent years enriching the cultural and musical life of District residents. I am pleased to join the Washington area in recognizing Mr. Smith's service and contributions to our community as he celebrates his recent birthday.

COLLEGE COST REDUCTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 11, 2007

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2669, the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007. A classic Democrat bait and switch proposal.

What the Democrats propose is a historic investment in student aid—what they deliver is massive new entitlement spending on programs controlled and run by their friends.

These new entitlement programs, which are exempt from annual congressional review, are replete with layers of bureaucracy, rules and regulations, and require virtually no accountability to the American taxpayer.

If the Democrats were serious about stemming the dramatic rise in college education costs, they would not use a reconciliation bill—a vehicle meant for deficit reduction—to push their agenda.

Yes, the legislation provides cuts to student loan providers estimated at $18.58 billion over 5 years, but instead of using that money to lower the deficit as is custom, this legislation actually spends $17.13 billion (almost 92 percent) during that same period on multiple programs—including 9 new areas of mandatory Federal entitlement spending.

This bill will not improve access to higher education for low and middle-income Americans. In fact, it has the potential to cost student borrowers and their parents thousands of dollars more in interest on Federal student loans by wiping out the interest rate discounts currently available to borrowers. Furthermore, this legislation could lead to the elimination of consumer choice and lender competition, making it a boon to the Direct Loan Program.

In recent years, the Direct Loan Program's market share has fallen to 22 percent because schools have chosen to participate in the FFEL Program instead. Cutting the successful FFEL program is a back-handed way to increase the competitive position of direct lending, a program that up until now has been withering on the vine through the voluntary attrition of colleges.

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing H.R. 2669. Our students deserve more from us than to play politics with their college education.

COMMEMORATING SAFRAN DRIVE IN THE CITY OF GRAND PRAIRIE, TEXAS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my gratitude to the contributions of the companies of the Safran Group and to commemorate the naming of Safran Drive in Grand Prairie, Texas.

The Safran Group companies of Turbomeca USA, Microturbo Inc. and Sagem Avionics have played a substantial role in providing resources, jobs and business growth in Grand Prairie and have shown tremendous commitment to the community. All three companies show strong growth potential and together they already employ more than 500 people from the surrounding area. Once named, Safran Drive will adjoin these companies' headquarters and will facilitate the sharing of resources and personnel.

Turbomeca USA has grown from a small, five-man operation in 1980 to a corporation that now employs more than 400 highly trained and dedicated people. It offers a wide range of overhaul and repair services for helicopter engines, modules and accessories and serves single aircraft operators and fleets of more than 100 aircrafts. Turbomeca has proudly provided the engines that power the U.S. Coast Guard HH–65 Search and Rescue Helicopter fleet and that of the U.S. Army Light Utility Helicopter fleet.

Microturbo Inc. has also supported our armed services, shipping more than 1,000 turbojet engines to the U.S. Army and Air Force for their aerial targets programs. It also maintains, repairs and overhauls the gas turbine starting system installed in the U.S. Navy's T45 Hawk trainer aircraft and the Canadian Forces Hawk 100 NATO aircraft.

Sagem Avionics supplements the products and services of Turbomeca and Microturbo, especially in the commercial sector as it provides technical support, MRO services and marketing and sales of commercial aerospace products. Sagem will soon be headquartered adjacent to the other two Safran Group companies on Safran Drive, creating a powerful hub of aircraft resources and greatly supporting the people of Grand Prairie with its expanding workforce.

Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I honor and recognize these three great companies in my district for the economic opportunities that they create and the outstanding community presence they provide. I am privileged to commemorate Safran Drive as a symbol of the great things to come from these esteemed corporations.

ERIC EDWARD ADAMS FOR THE AWARD OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Eric Edward Adams, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 376, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Eric has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Eric has been involved in scouting, he has earned 34 merit badges and held numerous leadership positions, serving as Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Scribe, Quartermaster and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. Eric is also an Ordeal Member in the Order of the Arrow and a Warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say.

For his Eagle Scout project, Eric planned and supervised the construction of a 24-foot handicap accessible walking bridge over a ditch at the earnest Shepherd Youth Center in Liberty, Missouri. Erik has also attended three National High Adventures Camps, and has earned the 12 Month Camper Award and the 100 Nights Camper Award.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Eric Edward Adams for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO PATTI WINKLER

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Madam Speaker, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to a remarkable woman, whom I have known for over 30 years. On July 20, 2007, Patti Winkler will retire after 34 years working for See's Candies.

Patti Winkler was born in Canada and moved to the United States as a child. She lived with her mother, father, brothers and sisters in South Sacramento, CA, until the late eighties when the family moved to Roseville. Today, Patti still lives in Roseville and shares her home with her mother, Rita, her two sisters Maxine and Mary Jane, her nephew Robbie, and five dogs. Patti enjoys visiting her family cabin in Cascade Shores, where she and her sisters spend time boating in Scott's Flat Lake, pulling the children behind on tubes, and then returning to the cabin at the end of the day to play card games.

In her life, Patti's family has always come first. She takes great pleasure in accompanying her mother to play bingo, helping her nephew through college, and cooking one of her famous BLT sandwiches for anyone in the family. Her loving and generous spirit is particularly evident during the Christmas season, as she cooks for her family and brings cookies and toffee in for her coworkers.

As a frequent customer, I always look forward to seeing Patti when I visit the See's Candies store in Roseville. Patti began working for See's in November 1973 at the Arden Fair Mall. Both her mother and sister Janie also worked for See's. On September 29, 1988, she opened the See's store in Roseville, which she managed until 2003. Patti knows the workings of the shop better than anyone else, and is special not only to the store's customers, but also to the people she works with, who truly cherish Patti's friendship. She makes the shop warm and inviting to anyone who works there and goes out of her way to make everyone feel like part of the team. While her family will benefit from spending more time with Patti in her retirement, her coworkers and customers are truly sad to see her go.

During her retirement, Patti is looking forward to splitting her time between her home in Roseville and their cabin in Cascade Shores. She also plans to continue traveling, as she enjoys taking cruises with her family to Alaska, Mexico, the Caribbean, and through the east coast. I join everyone who knows Patti in wishing her many happy moments in retirement, and thanking her for the joy she brings to everyone she knows.

STATEMENT UPON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ''SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER PRIVACY AND IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION ACT OF 2007''

HON. MICHAEL R. McNULTY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. MCNULTY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the ''Social Security Number Privacy and Identity Theft Protection Act of 2007.'' As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security, I am proud to introduce this bipartisan bill along with my chief cosponsor, the Ranking Member of the subcommittee, SAM JOHNSON. We are also joined by Members of the Committee on Ways and Means, which has jurisdiction over the Social Security number (SSN). This bill is modeled after legislation sponsored in prior Congresses by our friends and former colleagues Congressman CLAY SHAW, and the late Congressman Bob Matsui, who were our predecessors on the subcommittee.

The bill is the subcommittee's response to the growing problem of identity theft. Our subcommittee has held 16 hearings on identity theft and the misuse of Social Security numbers since 2000. Numerous experts have testified that identity theft is greatly facilitated by the easy availability of SSNs in public and private sector records and because of the rampant use of the number as an individual identifier. Once obtained, criminals use the SSN to impersonate their victims or unlock access to their good credit histories to open new accounts.

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. Research by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in 2003 found that almost 5 percent of the adult population of the U.S.—some ten million people—were victims of some kind of identity theft in just a single 12-month period. A more recent private sector survey estimated the number of victims at 15 million in the 12 months prior to August 2006.

Identity theft ruins individuals' good names and destroys their credit ratings. Identity thieves have stolen the homes of elderly retirees, and have caused innocent persons to be arrested when crimes are committed under a falsified identity. It has even ruined the future credit ratings of young children.

The FTC reports that individuals spend $5 billion a year attempting to recover their good names and credit histories. Annual surveys find that businesses lose more than $50 billion

per year to identity theft-related fraud. Victims often spend years recovering from the damage done by such thieves.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) and its Inspector General have worked diligently to increase the integrity and security of the Social Security number, and the procedures used in issuing numbers and cards. But despite its value as a key facilitator of identity theft crimes, SSA has essentially no control over how the Social Security number is used by other governmental agencies or the private sector. The SSN was originally created for SSA's use in the administration of the Social Security programs. Its use has grown, piecemeal, by the federal government as a result of regulation or legislation, wherever a unique identifier was needed for official government purposes. However, no law of general applicability explicitly allows or specifically requires the private sector to collect, sell, or use the SSN to the extent that it is done so today. Although the Social Security Act requires government entities to protect the confidentiality of the SSN, no law exists that generally protects the privacy of the SSN in the private sector.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) and other law enforcement experts have testified before the subcommittee that the current patchwork of laws that regulate how businesses and government agencies use and disclose personally identifiable information in their records leaves large gaps in protection for the SSN. While financial services and consumer reporting agencies are subject to some regulation controlling how and when they may disclose SSNs to third parties, there are limitations in these protections. Moreover, other industries remain completely free to buy and sell personal information about individuals with whom they have no business relationship. Sophisticated identity thieves have taken advantage of the gaps in protection and have been able to pose as users of personal information for purportedly legitimate purposes, gaining access to hundreds of thousands of SSNs sold by information brokers. Stalkers are also able to capitalize on the lack of protection for Social Security numbers and use them to locate and track their targets.

For these reasons, the legislation we introduce today will restrict the ability of government agencies, private businesses and others to sell, purchase or publicly display Social Security numbers. In recognition that a general prohibition may disrupt legitimate government uses and business practices that rely on the SSN, certain exceptions are made for law enforcement purposes, national security, public health, where the health or safety of an individual is at risk in an emergency situation, to ensure the accuracy of credit and insurance underwriting information and certain other Fair Credit Reporting Act purposes, for tax compliance purposes, if incidental to the sale or merger of a business, to administer employee or government benefits, for limited research purposes, with the individual's affirmative and written consent, and to the extent authorized by the Social Security Act. Further exceptions may be made for other purposes by regulation. Among other new requirements, the bill also restricts the display of SSNs on the Internet, on government documents and identification cards and tags. The bill's provisions will be enforceable by civil and criminal penalties imposed by federal agencies or state attorneys general; and by a limited ability of citizens to stop a federal agency's lack of compliance and recover actual damages through federal court action.

Madam Speaker, it is my expectation that this legislation will give us more control over how the SSN is used, in order to better protect the SSN from identity thieves and other criminals. I am proud to sponsor this bill and to join my colleagues as we move this legislation forward.

A summary of the bill follows.

PROVISIONS RELATED TO SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS (SSNS) IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

Federal, State, and local governments would be prohibited from:

Selling SSNs (limited exceptions would be allowed, such as to facilitate law enforcement and national security, to ensure the accuracy of credit and insurance underwriting information and certain other Fair Credit Reporting Act purposes, for tax purposes, for research purposes, and to the extent authorized by the Social Security Act). Further exceptions may be made for other purposes by regulation.

Displaying SSNs to the general public, including on the Internet.

Displaying SSNs on checks issued for payment and accompanying documents.

Displaying SSNs on identification cards and tags issued to employees or their families; patients and students at public institutions; and Medicare cards.

Employing prisoners in jobs that provide them with access to SSNs.

Requiring the transmission of SSNs over the Internet without encryption or other security measures.

The private sector would be prohibited from:

Selling or purchasing SSNs (limited exceptions would be made for law enforcement (including child support enforcement); national security; public health; health or safety emergency situations; tax purposes; to ensure the accuracy of credit and insurance underwriting information and certain other Fair Credit Reporting Act purposes; if incidental to the sale, lease or merger of a business; to administer employee or government benefits; for some research; or with the individual's affirmative, written consent). Further exceptions may be made for other purposes by regulation.

Displaying SSNs to the general public, including on the Internet.

Displaying SSNs on checks.

Requiring the transmission of SSNs over the Internet without encryption or other security measures.

Making unnecessary disclosures of another individual's SSN to government agencies.

Displaying the SSN on cards or tags issued to employees, their family members, or other individuals.

Displaying the SSN on cards or tags issued to access goods, services, or benefits.

Public and private sectors would be required to safeguard SSNs they have in their possession from unauthorized access by employees or others.

Sale, purchase, or display of SSNs in the public or private sector would be permitted by regulation in other circumstances, when appropriate. In making this determination, regulators would consider whether the authorization would serve a compelling public interest and would consider the costs and burdens to the public, government, and businesses. If sale, purchase, or display were to be authorized, the regulation would provide for restrictions to prevent identity theft, fraud, deception, crime, and risk of bodily, emotional, or financial harm.

A person would be prohibited from obtaining another person's SSN to locate or identify the individual with the intent to harass, harm, physically injure or use the individual's identity for an illegal purpose.

Would specify that, wherever a truncated SSN is used, it must be limited to the last 4 digits of the number. (This truncation standard does not change the permissible uses of the SSN.)

State law governing use of SSNs would not be preempted where state law is stronger.

The National Research Council would be required to conduct a study to evaluate the feasibility of banning the use of the SSN as an authenticator.

ENFORCEMENT

New criminal penalties (up to 5 years imprisonment and fine up to $250,000) and civil penalties (up to $5,000 per incident) would be created for violations of the law relating to the display, sale, purchase, or misuse of the SSN, offering to acquire an additional SSN for a fee, and for selling or transferring one's own SSN.

Prison sentences would be enhanced for SSN misuse associated with repeat offenders (up to 10 years), drug trafficking or crimes of violence (up to 20 years), or terrorism (up to 25 years).

New criminal penalties (as much as 20 years in prison and fine up to $250,000) and civil penalties (up to $5,000 per incident) would be created for Social Security Administration employees who fraudulently sell or transfer SSNs or Social Security cards.

The bill permits enforcement by the Social Security Administration (which would have civil monetary penalty authority); the Department of Justice (which enforces criminal violations of federal law); and state attorneys general (who would be granted civil enforcement authority over private-sector users and state and local government). In addition, individual victims affected by violations of this bill by federal agencies would be provided with limited legal recourse to stop an agency's violation and recover any actual damages they may have suffered.

HONORING THE CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF LAURA ELISABETH ULRICH

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Laura Elisabeth Ulrich, a senior at Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, LA, who at the young age of 19 was invited to participate in the prestigious Rome Festival Opera. The festival was held in Rome from June 28 though July 13, 2007.

Ulrich was selected to be the understudy for the role of Cherubino in Marriage of Figaro, an opera that is performed in Italian. One of only 10 Americans selected to perform, Ulrich does not speak Italian fluently; however, she demonstrated the level of talent, skill and experience required by the festival's performers.

A student of voice under Dr. Laura Thompson at Louisiana Tech, Ulrich has certainly made a name for herself in North Louisiana, but I believe her experience in Rome foreshadows a career that will include honor and recognition on the global scale.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Laura Elisabeth Ulrich whose natural abilities and dedication to her art will surely transform her into one of our Nation's finest vocal performers.

TERI ZENNER—SOCIAL WORKER KILLED IN PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, I would like to tell you about the silent war of crime on the social worker community of America.

Teri Zenner loved being a social worker. In August 2004, Teri went to check on a routine visit to a mentally unstable client, to make sure that he was taking his medication. When she went into the client's home, he accosted her with a knife and ordered her up into his bedroom, holding her hostage.

What his intentions for Teri were are not known. He never got the chance to act on them. He lived with his mother and she came home early from work that day. His mother heard Teri's cries from the lower level of the house and went to investigate.

Opening the door to her son's bedroom, the mother saw Teri being held hostage by her son. Teri, seeing her one opportunity to escape, ran for the door. As she tried to free herself, her captor stabbed her in the throat. She continued her desperate run for freedom, but her attacker gave chase and continued to stab her over and over. He then went up to his bedroom, where he had a chainsaw, and continued his assault on Teri with it. Teri Zenner was 26 years old. She died because she was trying to make sure that her attacker had been taking care of himself.

I have met Teri's husband, Matt, a wonderful man—he too is a victim of his wife's homicide.

I would like to thank Congressman DENNIS MOORE, KS, for bringing this homicide to the attention of Congress. The issue of social worker safety has become vitally important in the United States. They are literally on the front lines of social violence in our country.

Social workers are required to respond to homes to evaluate claims of child abuse and neglect. Many of these situations require that the workers remove the children from the home, a solution that angers the accused parents. These types of situations leave social workers vulnerable to escalating situations and threats of violence, without the training or resources necessary to protect themselves.

As the saying goes, ''No good deed goes unpunished.'' The good they do for our community is sometimes punished by people in the community. In 2005 and 2006, in Texas, there were several attacks on social workers. One of those attacks resulted in a social worker being murdered. According to Texas social workers, they are subjected to being ''threatened, cursed at, chased by dogs, spit upon, and run out of houses by angry parents.''

It has become essential for this Nation to protect those who work to protect our children, and others, in our society. For these reasons, Congressman DENNIS MOORE has introduced H.R. 2165—Teri Zenner Social Worker Safety Act, which I am an original cosponsor. This legislation will establish grants to provide social workers, domestic violence outreach staff, and other individuals who work with at-risk populations with workplace safety measures, equipment, and training.

These crimes affect all States and all districts throughout the Nation—and these individuals should not worry about their personal safety while striving to protect the most vulnerable victims—children.

Social workers are the second highest at-risk group of people in our society. The first are peace officers. Social workers deserve our protection.

Madam Speaker, we need to get to a place in our country where we no longer have the need to name laws after murder victims.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT EMPLOYEE LEARNING WEEK

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the American Society for Training & Development, ASTD, as one of the largest associations dedicated to workplace learning and performance professionals, and recognize their annual Employee Learning Week, that is to be held December 3rd through the 7th, 2007.

In 1944, ASTD began their first annual conference. ASTD has widened the profession's focus to connect learning and performance to individual and organizational results, and is considered a strong voice in the field of workplace development.

Members of ASTD come from more than 100 countries and connect locally in 136 U.S. chapters and 25 global networks. Members work in thousands of organizations of all sizes, in government, as independent consultants, and suppliers.

ASTD has a commitment to maintaining an edge in the highly skilled workforce that is critical to growing and sustaining a competitive advantage. To further these goals, ASTD has declared December 3rd through the 7th, 2007, as ''Employee Learning Week'' and designated time for organizations to recognize the strategic value of employee learning.

I applaud ASTD and its members for their commitment to developing the skills of employees and the workforce during Employee Learning Week, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting policies that commit to maintaining a highly skilled workforce.

TRIBUTE TO JACK CARTER

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a true American hero, Jack Carter, who proudly served our country in both the Navy and the Army during both World War II and the Korean war. He then returned home to be a leader in Morgan County, Colorado.

Jack Carter was born in 1925 and joined the Navy in January of 1943, at the age of 17. One of Jack's first assignments was to the fleet Marine Corps as a medic. He made 3 beach landings before he was hit in the stomach with a 25 mm round during the infamous invasion of Guam on February 25, 1944. After 45 days of rest and recuperation he was reassigned to the aircraft carrier USS *Ranger*, where he remained until his discharge in November 1945.

Jack and his friend Murl Ring re-enlisted 3 years later, this time in the U.S. Army. The two friends managed to stay together and were assigned to the 34th Regiment of the 24th Infantry when the Korean war broke out. The two friends survived when most of the 34th was lost in battle, hiding for 3 days before being rescued. Both men were medics and they were involved in numerous firefights.

Jack received a long list of awards and honors for his incredible service, including the Silver Star, Purple Heart, and 2 Bronze Stars, one with a V for valor, and another for meritorious unit actions against an enemy. Jack was on active duty for 13 years altogether and spent 10 years in the National Guard.

Following his heroic service, Mr. Carter and his wife Dorothy moved to Brush, Colorado, in 1961 with their children Jerald, Paul, Jack and Carol. He has been married to his second wife Alyce for 43 years and they have a wonderful daughter Lauralyn. Four of Jack's 5 children served in the military; Jerold was an Army pilot who lost his life in Vietnam.

Jack worked at the Brush Hospital in both the lab and the x-ray department. Jack is well known in Morgan County for organizing the Morgan County Ambulance Service in 1967. He organized the meetings, trainings and helped establish bylaws and procedures. This volunteer system has been in place until fairly recently. Jack was honored as the Optimist Citizen of the Year in 1969 and later became the first Brush Optimist Club President.

Madam Speaker, we are so fortunate to live in this great country where freedom is something that we rarely have to think about and often take for granted. It is simply a way of life for us, and we are truly blessed to live in a country whose citizens willingly volunteer to put themselves in harm's way to defend and protect our great Nation.

I am proud to honor Jack for his dedicated service to our Nation. Jack is a hero who left his home to defend our Nation, and then returned home to be a valued member of his community, showing his children and grandchildren how to live meaningful lives of service. Jack truly is the embodiment of all the values that have molded America into the great nation it is today. May God bless Jack and his family, may God bless our precious veterans, and may God bless America.

CELEBRATING BEECH SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Beech Springs Baptist Church, located in the quiet north Louisiana town of Quitman—which I am proud to call my home.

While the church building, which began as a humble one-room schoolhouse in 1907, has changed many times over the past century to accommodate the growing membership, the

role of Beech Springs Baptist Church has always remained the same—to be a place where members of the community can go to worship and where all those who enter will find Christian love, fellowship and guidance. I have attended this church many times, and it is evident to me that God truly works through the people of Beech Springs Baptist Church.

Throughout its long history, Beech Springs Baptist Church has bonded together through its faith in Christ to persevere through local tragedies as well as difficult times in our nation's history such as the Great Depression and war. However, the church has also been a place of great celebration and joy. Countless Sunday morning worship services, baptisms, weddings and revivals have been held there, and I am confident that many more will take part over the next century.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Beech Springs Baptist Church, which will celebrate this landmark anniversary on July 22, 2007, for its efforts to be a source of Christian love, strength, and comfort over the past 100 years and for its desire to continue serving Christ in the Quitman community.

BEHIND EVERY MAN, THERE'S A LADY BIRD

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, my grandmother influenced my life in so many ways and she educated me in the ways of the world more than anyone in my life, but to her dismay I broke from her staunchest southern belief—the Democratic Party. I don't know that she ever forgave me for being a Republican and during the 60s, in the heyday of LBJ, she was aghast that anyone could be anything else. Despite my political difference with President Lyndon Johnson, his contributions to Texas as President may only be surpassed by those of his First Lady. This week we said goodbye to one of the finest southern ladies politics and Texas has ever had the pleasure of knowing, Lady Bird Johnson.

My grandmother always said, "there is nothing more powerful than a woman—that has made up her mind!" There are no truer words; and none that describe our former First Lady better. Claudia Alta Taylor Johnson, known throughout the world simply as Lady Bird, not only changed the landscape of Texas highways, but paved the way for the next generation of women. She was the best example of the powerful role women of her generation played—second to my grandmother of course.

While Lady Bird will best be remembered for her love of the environment and the preservation of our natural resources, she was no wallflower in the business and political world either. She was her husband's staunchest supporter and was with him step-for-step throughout his entire career, but at the same time she also carved a path for herself in the business world by turning a debt-ridden Austin radio station into a multi-million dollar broadcast empire. Her resume reads like that of a modern-day Superwoman. Among her many achievements, she played a pivotal part in shaping legislation by lobbying and speaking before Congress in support of the Highway Beautification Bill, or better known as the "Lady Bird Bill." She oversaw every detail in the creation of the LBJ Presidential Library, which became the model for Presidential libraries today, and served faithfully, and often in awe of her colleagues, as a regent of her alma matter, the University of Texas.

Like my grandmother she came from a generation of women that were strong and influential. They possessed the grace of an angel, but wielded a heavy-hand in running their affairs—and those of their husbands' for that matter. Few women of their generation worked outside the home, but few men succeeded without the backing of them. Whether they devoted their time to their work or to their home, their influence undoubtedly changed the country we live in today. Texas Congressman Sam Rayburn, longtime friend of President Johnson and House Speaker, once told him, "marrying Lady Bird was the wisest decision he had ever made." Few people know that Lady Bird originally told LBJ "no," when he asked to marry her.

Every Spring folks will head up Highway 290 to see wildflowers; and every bluebonnet we see throughout the Texas Hill Country and every tree we plant here at home along Will Clayton Parkway is a tribute to Lady Bird and her determination to "Keep Texas Beautiful." Her legacy and influence will live on forever. I doubt that Texas, nor our country. will ever know a finer lady and patriot than we had in Lady Bird Johnson. As the saying goes, behind every good man, there stands a better woman. May God bless Lady Bird Johnson as she has blessed us.

And that's just the way it is.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ROBERT NICHOLSON

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Robert Nicholson of Alexandria, VA, on being awarded the Air Force Association's DW Steele Chapter "Teacher of the Year Award."

A teacher at Alexandria County Public Schools since 1984, Mr. Nicholson has taught earth sciences, oceanography and astronomy and is also the Earth Sciences Division coordinator at TC Williams High School.

Mr. Nicholson's creative approach to education allows him to teach a variety of classes using hands-on learning that captivates students while enriching their learning experience. Deputy Superintendent of Alexandria County Public Schools, Cathy David, praised Mr. Nicholson not only for his outstanding work in enhancing the science curriculum at TC Williams but also for mentoring fellow teachers, ensuring consistency and rigor in the science curriculum.

In addition to the courses he teaches Mr. Nicholson is planetarium director at TC Williams High School and is known to use his free time to give shows to students outside his astronomy classes and also gives informative and entertaining presentations to middle and elementary school students from Alexandria City Public Schools and area private schools. Fellow colleagues from all disciplines frequently ask Mr. Nicholson to present planetarium shows that relate to their specific content needs.

Mr. Nicholson is truly an asset to the students he inspires and the lives he shapes in the Eighth District of Virginia. I congratulate him on being awarded this great honor.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVACY AND IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION ACT OF 2007"

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, you know Americans are rightly worried about the security of their personal information, including their Social Security number. Practically a day doesn't go by when we don't read about or hear about another data breach in the private or public sector where hundreds if not thousands of people's personal identity information is stolen.

According to the Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, the total number of known records that have been compromised since January 2005 through last week was over 158 million.

The fact is that even though Social Security numbers were created to track earnings for determining eligibility and benefit amounts under Social Security, these numbers are widely used as personal identifiers. According to the Government Accountability Office, Social Security numbers have become the "identifier of choice" and are used for every day business transactions. In fact, in their April 2007 report, the President's Identity Theft Task Force identified the Social Security number as the "most valuable commodity for an identity thief."

These thieves are hard at work. According to the latest data provided by Federal Trade Commission, over a one year period nearly 10 million people, or about 5 percent of the adult population, discovered they were victims of identity theft. Even worse, the true number of victims of this devastating crime is unknown, since most victims do not report the crime.

Losses due to ID thefts have been estimated to exceed $50 billion annually. Victims spend roughly 300 million hours a year trying to re-establish their hard-earned credit and clearing their good name.

Even worse, identity theft continues to threaten our national security. As said in the 9/11 Commission Report, "Fraud in identification documents is no longer just a problem of theft. At many entry points to vulnerable facilities, including gates for boarding aircraft, sources of identification are the last opportunity to ensure that people are who they say they are and to check whether they are terrorists."

The Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security has been working on a bipartisan basis to protect the privacy of Social Security numbers and prevent identity theft since the 106th Congress when it first approved the Social Security Number Privacy and Identity Theft Prevention Act of 2000, to restrict the sale and public display of Social Security numbers. This legislation was introduced on a bipartisan basis by then Subcommittee Chairman Clay Shaw and then Ranking Member,

the late Bob Matsui. Today, we continue that bipartisan effort to help stop the rampant use of Social Security numbers as I join the Chairman of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security, MIKE MCNULTY, to introduce the ''Social Security Number Privacy and Identity Theft Prevention Act of 2007.''

This bill achieves three critical goals. First, it would limit access to SSNs in the public and private sector by restricting their sale, purchase, and public display, including display on the Internet.

Second, the bill would protect individuals by prohibiting persons from obtaining SSNs to find a person with the intent to physically injure or harm them.

Finally the bill would enforce these restrictions through civil and criminal penalties for violations.

Providing for uses of Social Security numbers that benefit the public while protecting their privacy is a complex balancing act. This bill achieves that balance.

It is long past time for Congress to act to help stop the widespread use of Social Security numbers, help prevent ID theft, and further protect American's privacy. I urge all my colleagues to sponsor this important bipartisan legislation.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOSHUA S. MODGLING

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of PFC Joshua S. Modgling who died on Tuesday June 19, 2007, of injuries sustained in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Private First Class Modgling had been in Iraq since May and was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Georgia. PFC Modgling was killed while conducting missions out of Forward Operating Base Falcon when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle in Muhammad al Ali, Iraq.

PFC Modgling was raised in Las Vegas Valley and attended Manch Elementary School and Silverado High School. During his youth, Joshua played Pop Warner football and set a record for the most sacks. Private First Class Modgling was a hero whose desire to serve his country will forever make an impact on his family, his community and his country. He joined the United States Army to serve his country in the Global War on Terror. He will not only be remembered for his sacrifice and willing service, but for the extraordinary person that he was. His warmth and optimism brightened the lives of his family and friends.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life of PFC Joshua S. Modgling. His heroism and sacrifice for his country while fighting the Global War on Terror are the highest tribute to the democracy and freedom we hold so dear.

FREE THE ISRAELI SOLDIERS

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, it's been almost one year now and many have forgotten about the three Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hamas and Hezbollah: Ehud Goldwasser, Eldad Regev, and Gilal Shalit. But today thousands who will not forget this injustice rallied in front of the United Nations calling for these three captives to be returned to their families and for the Security Council Resolutions to be honored by all parties—not just Israel.

Hezbollah seems to have forgotten that last year's hostilities ended only after there were promises regarding the return of the Israeli men. This just goes to reinforce the fact that terrorist organizations cannot be negotiated with.

Though Security Council Resolution 1701 called for Hezbollah to disarm and return the soldiers, they remain in Lebanon and not even international organizations such as the Red Cross have been able to see them and be assured of their fair treatment. Israel has demonstrated its commitment to the Resolution by ceasing hostilities and pulling back its soldiers, but yet again they are dealing with opponents who show disrespect to all and whose word cannot be trusted.

We stand together with Israel to call again for the unconditional release of these three men. We pray for their safe return and for peace between Israel and its neighbors. They will not be forgotten by their families, by their nation, or by the American people and this Congress.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MARK T. KEETON

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of a great American, Mark Thomas Keeton. As a 19 year veteran of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue, Mr. Keeton dedicated his life to serving the City of Las Vegas, and it is a distinct honor to recognize his service to the Southern Nevada community.

Mark Keeton, a Nevada resident for 42 years passed away on May 8, 2007, at the age of 44 after a battle with brain cancer. Mr. Keeton served the Las Vegas community as a firefighter for 19 years, facing not only the immediate dangers of fires inherent to the profession, but also the hazards posed by the chemicals and smoke to which firefighters are frequently exposed. In addition to Mr. Keeton's 19 years of service as a firefighter of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue, Mark was also a veteran of the United States Air Force, serving in the Persian Gulf War. Mr. Keeton was a member of the International Association of Firefighters and will be honored this year on their Wall of Honor, which recognizes the great sacrifices made by firefighters who have fallen in the line of duty.

Madam Speaker, it is with great respect and deep appreciation that I honor the life of Mark Thomas Keeton. His commitment and dedication to the Las Vegas community will never be forgotten. I give my sincere condolences to his wife, Lerma and their children, Sean and Sharon, and thank him for his honorable service to our country.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 90TH BIRTHDAY OF THELMA NEWMAN FRAZIER

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, today I ask you and my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life Thelma Newman Frazier on the occasion her 90th birthday. The daughter of farm workers Eugene Newman and Kate Robinson, Thelma was born on July 26, 1917 in Richland County, AR.

Thelma is truly a child of God, having accepted Christ as her Lord and savior at an early age. She is a past member of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church and currently attends Shalom Church City of Peace.

Thelma was united in holy matrimony to Nathaniel Frazier, Sr. on April 17, 1941. To this union were born two children, Katie M. McKinney and Nathaniel Jr., who preceded her in death. In 1952, Thelma and her family migrated to St. Louis, Missouri. There she became active in the community. A devout member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Thelma worked tirelessly to carry out their mission.

Mrs. Frazier has been rewarded in life by her hard work and dedication to family. She has a devoted daughter, Katie M. McKinney, son-in-law, Lewis L. McKinney Sr., 13 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren, and 7 great-great-grandchildren. Her hard work has influenced her family tremendously. She is proud of all their accomplishments.

The matriarch of her family, Thelma continues to live independently in St. Louis and is a constant support to her family through her unconditional love and encouragement. If only every child was blessed to have had a mother, grandmother, or aunt like Thelma Newman Frazier, the world would be a better place. Happy birthday, Thelma, and may you be blessed with many, many more.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF POLISH NEWS

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Polish News, Chicago's Polish American monthly magazine. Polish News has served as an integral part of the Polish American community for the past decade, documenting Polish American culture in Chicago and around the world.

On behalf of the more than 110,000 residents of the Fifth Congressional District of Polish descent, I want to congratulate Polish

News on their 10 years of success, and wish them well for many more to come.

Publications like Polish News promote cultural understanding and are vital in maintaining cohesive relationships in a Nation as diverse as our own. For the past 10 years, Polish News has documented the vibrant social, civic, and philanthropic accomplishments of Polish Americans and their contributions to our society.

The magazine's success is due in large part to its wide array of content, including interviews with prominent Polish American leaders, profiles of community members and special events, and information on historical moments of importance to the Polish community.

Polish Americans have shared a leading role in business, fine arts, charity and many other forms of public service. The Polish American influence has shaped the city of Chicago and our country into the strong and dynamic Nation that it is today. I commend Polish News for documenting these events, ideas, and stories.

Today, I am proud to reaffirm our appreciation and respect for the Polish culture and the Polish American community as we congratulate Polish News on its dedication to promoting our city's ethic pride. I look forward to continuing to read Polish News in the years to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JAMES ''SKOGIE'' LENON

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 16, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of my good friend James 'Skogie' Lenon, who passed away on May 5, 2007. Skogie was a dear friend who was instrumental in helping me get established early in my career.

A longtime resident of Boulder City, NV, James 'Skogie' Lenon made a huge impact on the life of his community. Skogie earned his nickname from a t-shirt he often wore, which read, "Muskogee YMCA". Skogie was a caring man, who worked often to uphold the small-town, family-oriented feel of Boulder City. In 1955, Skogie was on the original committee to help raise funds for the Boulder City Hospital. During World War II, unable to join the military due to a childhood illness, he became Assistant Director of the Boulder City United Service Organizations. After the war, he became a Naval Reserve Officer. Skogie helped in building and operating the first skating rink, as well as the first city swimming pool in Boulder City. He was President of the Boulder City Recreation Association and a member of the Boulder City Golf Association. He spent much of his time enjoying golf, and played a large part in adding nine holes at the Boulder City Municipal Golf Course.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and service of James 'Skogie' Lenon. Skogie was a true patriot, having devoted his life to his community and country. His dedication to service should serve as an example to us all.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, July 17, 2007 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

July 18

9:30 a.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine modernization of Federal Housing Administration programs.

SD–538

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the federal response to ensuring the safety of Chinese imports.

SR–253

Finance

Business meeting to consider the nominations of David H. McCormick, of Pennsylvania, to be an Under Secretary, and Peter B. McCarthy, of Wisconsin, to be an Assistant Secretary, both of the Department of the Treasury, Kerry N. Weems, of New Mexico, to be Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Tevi David Troy, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Charles E. F. Millard, of New York, to be Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

SD–215

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 625, to protect the public health by providing the Food and Drug Administration with certain authority to regulate tobacco products, S. 1183, to enhance and further research into paralysis and to improve rehabilitation and the quality of life for persons living with paralysis and other physical disabilities, S. 1551, to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to making progress toward the goal of eliminating tuberculosis, and S. 579, to amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences to make grants for the development and operation of research centers regarding environmental factors that may be related to the etiology of breast cancer, and other pending calendar business.

SD–106

Judiciary

Business meeting to consider S. 1145, to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform, S. Res. 248, honoring the life and achievements of Dame Lois Browne Evans, Bermuda's first female barrister and Attorney General, and the first female Opposition Leader in the British Commonwealth, S. Res. 236, supporting the goals and ideals of the National Anthem Project, which has worked to restore America's voice by re-teaching Americans to sing the national anthem, S. 1060, to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, S. Res. 261, expressing appreciation for the profound public service and educational contributions of Donald Jeffry Herbert, fondly known as ''Mr. Wizard'', a bill entitled, ''School Safety and Law Enforcement Improvements Act'', and the nominations of Roslynn Renee Maus-kopf, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, William Lindsay Osteen, Jr., to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina, Martin Karl Reidinger, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of North Carolina, Timothy D. DeGiusti, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, Janis Lynn Sammartino, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, Rosa Emilia Rodriguez-Velez, to be United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico, and Joe W. Stecher, to be United States Attorney for the District of Nebraska.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Aging

To hold hearings to examine abuse of elderly citizens, focusing on prevention methods.

SD–628

2 p.m.

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine increasing government accountability and ensuring fairness in small business contracting.

SR–428A

July 19

9:30 a.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the semiannual monetary policy report to the Congress.

SD–538

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings to examine S. 1634, to implement further the Act approving the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America.

SD–366

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the war in Iraq, focusing on an update from the field.

SD–419

Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business, to be immediately followed by a hearing to examine draft legislation to amend and reauthorize the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act.

SR–485

10 a.m.

Judiciary

Business meeting to continue consideration of S. 1145, to amend title 35, United States Code, to provide for patent reform, S. Res. 248, honoring the life and achievements of Dame Lois

Browne Evans, Bermuda's first female barrister and Attorney General, and the first female Opposition Leader in the British Commonwealth, S. Res. 236, supporting the goals and ideals of the National Anthem Project, which has worked to restore America's voice by re-teaching Americans to sing the national anthem, S. 1060, to reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, S. Res. 261, expressing appreciation for the profound public service and educational contributions of Donald Jeffry Herbert, fondly known as ''Mr. Wizard'', a bill entitled, ''School Safety and Law Enforcement Improvements Act'', and the nominations of Roslynn Renee Mauskopf, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of New York, William Lindsay Osteen, Jr., of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of North Carolina, Martin Karl Reidinger, of North Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of North Carolina, Timothy D. DeGiusti, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, Janis Lynn Sammartino, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of California, Rosa Emilia Rodriguez-Velez, of Puerto Rico, to be United States Attorney for the District of Puerto Rico, and Joe W. Stecher, of Nebraska, to be United States Attorney for the District of Nebraska.

SD–226

10:30 a.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine the military's role in disaster response, focusing on progress since Hurricane Katrina.

SD–342

2 p.m.

Appropriations

Business meeting to markup proposed legislation making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008.

SD–106

2:15 p.m.

Finance

To hold hearings to examine aviation financing, focusing on industry perspectives.

SD–215

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider S. 1769, to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to facilitate number portability in order to increase consumer choice of voice service provider, S. 1780, to require the FCC, in enforcing its regulations concerning the broadcast of indecent programming, to maintain a policy that a single word or image may be considered indecent, S. 1582, to reauthorize and amend the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act, S. 1771, to increase the safety of swimming pools and spas by requiring the use of proper anti-entrapment drain covers and pool and spa drainage systems, to educate the public about pool and spa safety, S. 1778, to authorize certain activities of the Maritime Administration, S. 1492, to improve the quality of federal and state data regarding the availability and quality of broadband services and to promote the deployment of affordable broadband services to all parts of the Nation, and the nominations of Jonathan W. Bailey, and Philip M. Kenul, both to be Rear Admiral, for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

SR–253

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the mayoral proposal to reform the District of Columbia's public school system, focusing on assessments, assurances, and accountability.

SD–342

Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH–219

2:45 p.m.

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Sharion Aycock, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi, Jennifer Walker Elrod, of Texas, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit, and Richard A. Jones, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Washington.

SD–226

July 20

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine youth violence, focusing on the efficacy of mentoring children.

SD–116

July 24

9:30 a.m.

Judiciary

To continue oversight hearings to examine the Department of Justice.

SH–216

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the protection of children on the internet.

SR–253

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the BioShield and Preparedness programs, focusing on improvements needed for epidemics.

SD–628

July 25

9:30 a.m.

Veterans' Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine Department of Veterans Affairs health care funding.

SD–562

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Interstate Commerce, Trade, and Tourism Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine United States trade relations with China.

SR–253

July 26

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine preparation taken for digital television transition.

SR–253

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety and Security Subcommittee

To continue hearings to examine the Railroad Safety Enhancement Act.

SR–253

July 31

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Ronald Spoehel, of Virginia, to be Chief Financial Officer, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, William G. Sutton, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce, Thomas J. Barrett, of Alaska, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation, and Paul R. Brubaker, of Virginia, to be Administrator of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, Department of Transportation.

SR–253

Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

Routine Proceedings, pages S9229–S9292

Measures Introduced: Four bills and two resolutions were introduced, as follows: S. 1789–1792, S. Res. 273, and S. Con. Res. 41. **Page S9262**

Measures Reported:

S. 392, to ensure payment of United States assessments for United Nations peacekeeping operations for the 2005 through 2008 time period. (S. Rept. No. 110–130)

S. 1789, making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008. (S. Rept. No. 110–131) **Page S9262**

Measures Passed:

National Purple Heart Recognition Day: Committee on Armed Services was discharged from further consideration of S. Con. Res. 27, supporting the goals and ideals of ''National Purple Heart Recognition Day'', and the resolution was then agreed to, after agreeing to the following amendment proposed thereto:

Reed (for Clinton) Amendment No. 2269, of a perfecting nature. **Pages S9291–92**

Commending Minnesota National Guard: Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 41, commending the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom. **Page S9292**

Measures Considered:

National Defense Authorization Act: Senate resumed consideration of H.R. 1585, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2008 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel, taking action on the following amendments proposed thereto: **Pages S9236–58**

Pending:

Nelson (NE) (for Levin) Amendment No. 2011, in the nature of a substitute. **Page S9237**

Levin Amendment No. 2087 (to Amendment No. 2011), to provide for a reduction and transition of United States forces in Iraq. **Page S9237**

Reed Amendment No. 2088 (to Amendment No. 2087), to change the enactment date. **Page S9237**

Cornyn Amendment No. 2100 (to Amendment No. 2011), to express the sense of the Senate that it is in the national security interest of the United States that Iraq not become a failed state and a safe haven for terrorists. **Page S9237**

McConnell Amendment No. 2241 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2011), relative to a sense of the Senate on the consequences of a failed state in Iraq. **Pages S9238–39**

Durbin Amendment No. 2252 (to Amendment No. 2241), to change the enactment date. **Page S9244**

A motion was entered to close further debate on Levin Amendment No. 2087 (to Amendment No. 2011) (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, July 18, 2007. **Page S9239**

A motion was entered to close further debate on McConnell Amendment No. 2241 (to the language proposed to be stricken by Amendment No. 2011) (listed above), and, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, a vote on cloture will occur on Wednesday, July 18, 2007. **Page S9239**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing that no motions to commit be in order prior to the votes on the motions to invoke cloture on Wednesday, July 18, 2007. **Page S9244**

A unanimous-consent agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 11 a.m., on Tuesday, July 17, 2007. **Page S9292**

Appointments:

President's Export Council. The Chair, pursuant to Executive Order 12131, as amended, reappointed the following Member to the President's Export Council: Senator Enzi. **Page S9291**

Messages from the House: Pages S9260–61
Measures Referred: Page S9261
Measures Placed on the Calendar: Page S9261
Executive Communications: Pages S9261–62
Additional Cosponsors: Pages S9262–65
Statements on Introduced Bills/Resolutions: Pages S9264–65
Amendments Submitted: Pages S9265–91
Notices of Hearings/Meetings: Page S9291
Privileges of the Floor: Page S9291

Adjournment: Senate convened at 2 p.m. and adjourned at 7:50 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, July 17, 2007. (For Senate's program, see the remarks of the Acting Majority Leader in today's Record on page S9292.)

Committee Meetings

(Committees not listed did not meet)

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: 11 public bills, H.R. 3045–3055; and 4 resolutions, H. Res. 548–551 were introduced. Pages H7851–53

Additional Cosponsors: Page H7852

Reports Filed: Reports were filed today as follows:

H.R. 2547, to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to prevent misrepresentation about deposit insurance coverage (H. Rept. 110–234) and

H. Res. 547, providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008 (H. Rept. 110–235). Page H7851

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Hirono to act as Speaker Pro Tempore for today. Page H7785

Recess: The House recessed at 12:44 p.m. and reconvened at 2 p.m. Page H7787

Inspector General of the House of Representatives—Appointment: The Chair announced the joint appointment by the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader of Mr. James J. Cornell of Springfield, VA, to the position of Inspector General of the House of Representatives for the 110th Congress, effective January 4, 2007. Page H7788

Suspensions: The House agreed to suspend the rules and pass the following measures:

FDIC Enforcement Enhancement Act: H.R. 2547, amended, to amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act to prevent misrepresentation about deposit insurance coverage; Pages H7788–89

Agreed by unanimous consent that the House vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on adoption of H.R. 2547 to the end that the Chair put the question de novo. Page H7789

Housing Assistance Council Authorization Act of 2007: H.R. 1980, to authorize appropriations for the Housing Assistance Council, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 350 yeas to 49 nays, Roll No. 630; Pages H7789–93, H7819

Rural Housing and Economic Development Improvement Act of 2007: H.R. 1982, amended, to authorize appropriations for the rural housing and economic development program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 350 yeas to 49 nays, Roll No. 631; Pages H7793–95, H7819–20

Recognizing and honoring the Cathedral Square Corporation on its 30th anniversary: H. Res. 408, to recognize and honor the Cathedral Square Corporation on its 30th anniversary; Pages H7795–96

Supporting the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims: H. Con. Res. 87, to support the goals and ideals of a world day of remembrance for road crash victims; Pages H7796–97

Dr. Karl E. Carson Post Office Building Designation Act: H.R. 2570, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Boardwalk Drive in Fort Collins, Colorado, as the "Dr. Karl E. Carson Post Office Building"; Pages H7797–98

Requiring the Secretary of State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde: H.R. 2293,

to require the Secretary of State to submit to Congress a report on efforts to bring to justice the Palestinian terrorists who killed John Branchizio, Mark Parson, and John Marin Linde; **Pages H7798–H7800**

Honoring Operation Smile in the 25th anniversary year of its founding: H. Res. 208, amended, to honor Operation Smile in the 25th anniversary year of its founding; **Pages H7800–02**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "Recognizing the 25th anniversary of the founding of Operation Smile.". **Page H7802**

Commending the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the occasion of International Women's Day, for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights: H. Res. 294, amended, to commend the Kingdom of Lesotho, on the occasion of International Women's Day, for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights; **Pages H7802–04**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "Commending the Kingdom of Lesotho for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights.". **Page H7804**

Honoring World Red Cross Red Crescent Day: H. Res. 378, amended, to honor World Red Cross Red Crescent Day; **Pages H7804–05**

Agreed to amend the title so as to read: "Commending the humanitarian efforts of Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Magen David Adom National Societies worldwide on the occasion of World Red Cross Red Crescent Day.". **Page H7805**

Department of State Crisis Response Act of 2007: S. 966, amended, to enable the Department of State to respond to a critical shortage of passport processing personnel; **Pages H7805–07**

Recognizing the contribution of modeling and simulation technology to the security and prosperity of the United States, and recognizing modeling and simulation as a National Critical Technology: H. Res. 487, to recognize the contribution of modeling and simulation technology to the security and prosperity of the United States, and to recognize modeling and simulation as a National Critical Technology; **Pages H7807–11**

Redesignating Lock and Dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System near Redfield, Arkansas, authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act approved July 24, 1946, as the "Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam": H.R. 781, to redesignate Lock and Dam No. 5 of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System near Redfield, Arkansas, authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act approved July 24, 1946, as the "Colonel Charles D. Maynard Lock and Dam"; **Pages H7811–12**

Honoring United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States: H. Res. 375, amended, to honor United Parcel Service and its 100 years of commitment and leadership in the United States; and **Pages H7812–14**

Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2007: H.R. 799, amended, to reauthorize and improve the program authorized by the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965, by a ⅔ yea-and-nay vote of 332 yeas to 70 nays, Roll No. 632. **Pages H7814–18, H7820–21**

Recess: The House recessed at 4:50 p.m. and reconvened at 6:30 p.m. **Page H7818**

Public Interest Declassification Board—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Boehner, Minority Leader, in which he re-appointed the Honorable David Skaggs to the Public Interest Declassification Board for a term to expire on June 5, 2009. **Page H7821**

National Council on the Arts—Appointment: Read a letter from Representative Boehner, Minority Leader, in which he appointed Representative Tiberi to the National Council on the Arts. **Page H7821**

Senate Message: Message received from the Senate by the Clerk and subsequently presented to the House today appears on page H7788.

Senate Referrals: S. 975 was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. **Pages H7849–50**

Amendments: Amendments ordered printed pursuant to the rule appear on page H7853.

Quorum Calls—Votes: Three yea-and-nay votes developed during the proceedings of today and appear on pages H7819, H7819–20 and H7820–21. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 12:30 p.m. and adjourned at 10:59 p.m.

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Committee on Rules: Granted, by a voice vote, an open rule providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3043) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes. The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations.

This rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill except clauses 9 and 10 of rule XXI. The rule waives points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority recognition to Members who have printed their amendments in the Congressional Record. The rule provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions. Finally, the rule permits the Chair to postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker. Testimony was heard from Chairman Obey and Representative Walsh.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2007

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

Committee on Appropriations: Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies, business meeting to mark up proposed legislation making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, 10 a.m., SD–192.

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, to hold hearings to examine improving air services to small and rural communities, 10 a.m., SR–253.

Committee on Environment and Public Works: to hold hearings to examine the nominations of Robert Boldrey, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Trustees of the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation, Kristine L. Svinicki, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and R. Lyle Laverty, of Colorado, to be Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife, 10 a.m., SD–406.

Committee on Finance: business meeting to consider an original bill entitled, ''The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act'', 7 p.m., SD–215.

Committee on Foreign Relations: Subcommittee on African Affairs, to hold hearings to examine the efficacy of democratic developments in Sub-Saharan Africa, 10 a.m., SD–419.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Finland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital, signed at Helsinki May 31, 2006 (the ''Protocol'') (Treaty Doc. 109–18), protocol Amending the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income signed at Copenhagen May 2, 2006 (the ''Protocol'') (Treaty Doc. 109–19), protocol Amending the Convention Between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income and Capital and to Certain Other Taxes, Signed on August 29, 1989, signed at Berlin June 1, 2006 (the ''Protocol''), along with a related Joint Declaration (Treaty Doc. 109–20), Convention Between the United States and Belgium for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with the Respect to Taxes on Income and Accompanying Protocol (Treaty Doc. 110–3), patent Law Treaty and Regulations Under the Patent Law Treaty (the ''Treaty''), done at Geneva on June 1, 2000, between the Governments of 53 countries including the United States of America (Treaty Doc. 109–12), and the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs (the ''Agreement''), adopted in Geneva on July 2, 1999, and signed by the United States on July 6, 1999 (Treaty Doc. 109–21), and the Singapore Treaty on the Law of Trademarks (Treaty Doc. 110–2), protocol to the 1951 Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation between the United States and Denmark (Treaty Doc. 108–8), 2:30 p.m., SD–419.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions: Subcommittee on Retirement and Aging, to hold hearings to examine the federal response to the Alzheimer's epidemic, 2:30 p.m., SD–628.

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: to hold hearings to examine federal acquisition, focusing on ways to strengthen competition and accountability, 10 a.m., SD–342.

Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, to continue hearings to examine the readiness of the Census Bureau for the 2010 census, 2:30 p.m., SD–342.

Committee on the Judiciary: to hold hearings to examine the prosecution of Ignacio Ramos and Jose Compean, 10 a.m., SD–226.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs: business meeting to mark up the nomination of Charles L. Hopkins, of Massachusetts, to be an Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs (Operations, Preparedness, Security and Law Enforcement), Time to be announced, Room to be announced.

Full Committee, to hold hearings to examine Department of Veterans Affairs and Department of Defense collaboration and cooperation and the education needs for the returning service members, 2:30 p.m., SD–562.

House

Committee on Agriculture, to consider H.R. 2419, Farm Bill Extension Act of 2007, 1 p.m., 1300 Longworth.

Committee on the Budget, hearing on Budgeting to Fight Waste, Fraud, and Abuse, 10 a.m., 210 Cannon.

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, hearing entitled ''Diminished Capacity: Can the FDA Assure the Safety and Security of the Nation's Food Supply?—Part 2,'' 9:30 a.m., 2123 Rayburn.

Committee on Financial Services, to hold a hearing on Monetary Policy and State of the Economy, 10 a.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, hearing on H.R. 920, Multiple Peril Insurance Act of 2007, 2 p.m., 2128 Rayburn.

Committee on Foreign Affairs, hearing on U.S. Policy Options in the Iraq Crisis, 10:30 a.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, hearing on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migrating Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Oceans, and Other International Fisheries Agreements of U.S. Interest in Asia and the Pacific, 2 p.m., 2172 Rayburn.

Committee on Homeland Security, Subcommittee on Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment, to mark up H.R 1955, Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007, 2 p.m., 311 Cannon.

Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, hearing on Working Families in Financial Crisis: Medical Debt and Bankruptcy, 1 p.m., 2141 Rayburn.

Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight and the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, joint hearing on the Department of Energy's Support for the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL), Part I, 10 a.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation, hearing on Amendments to the Patent and Trade Act of 1980—the Next 25 Years, 1 p.m., 2318 Rayburn.

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, hearing on the Status of the Nation's Waters, including Wetlands, Under the Jurisdiction of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, 2 p.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Subcommittee on Aviation, hearing on FAA's Oversight of Falsified Airman Medical Certificate Applications, 10 a.m., 2167 Rayburn.

Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to mark up the following bills: H.R. 2623, To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the collection of copayments for all hospice care furnished by the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R. 2874, Veterans' Health Care Improvement Act of 2007; H.R. 1315, To amend title 38, United States Code, to provide specially adaptive housing assistance to certain disabled members of the Armed Forces residing temporarily in housing owned by a family member; H.R. 760, Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007; H.R. 513, National Heroes Credit Protection Act; and H.R. 23, Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2007, 2 p.m., 334 Cannon.

Next Meeting of the SENATE

10 a.m., Tuesday, July 17

Senate Chamber

Program for Tuesday: After the transaction of any morning business (not to extend beyond 60 minutes), Senate will continue consideration of H.R. 1585, National Defense Authorization Act.

(Senate will recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 p.m. for their respective party conferences.)

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

9 a.m., Tuesday, July 17

House Chamber

Program for Tuesday: Consideration of the following suspension: H.R. 980—Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 2007. Complete consideration of H.R. 2641—Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008. Begin consideration of H.R. 3043—Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2008.

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