apiece to compete.'' $500 million apiece to compete. This is a tremendous amount of throw-weight, to borrow a Cold War term.

''After nine months of fundraising, the candidates for President in 2008 have already raised about $420 million. This Presidential money chase seems to be on track to collect an unprecedented,'' and I repeat, ''$1 billion total''. That is probably four to five times as much as was collected just 4 years ago. On the Democratic side, HILLARY CLINTON has raised nearly $100 million. On the Republican side, Mitt Romney is about half that amount, but Rudy Giuliani is just on his tracks. BARACK OBAMA has raised about an equal amount to Senator CLINTON.

The projected Presidential spending will exceed the annual gross domestic product of 25 nations on this planet. Where is all this money coming from? If the Presidential campaign surpasses the $1 billion mark for the first time in our history, who will own the next President? Isn't that what the American people are asking? Will it be middle-class voters, who are holding on for dear life, ordinary working folks trying to pay for gasoline, put food on the table, pay insurance bills, pay utility bills, pay tuition costs, pay taxes? Will they have more influence over the next President of the United States? Or will the big-money special interests have more influence? We all know the answer to that question.

The people are telling us they are deeply troubled. All the polls show the American people feel that Washington is totally out of step with them. It's hard to imagine a Presidential candidate who is not beholden to special interests. It's hard to imagine that a candidate who relies on hedge funds, multinationals and special interests will be able to stand up for the middle class in America. The middle class is asking where is the President, where is the Congress.

What type of legacy is this leaving for our children? Will they not conclude our Republic is owned lock, stock and barrel by the rich and powerful? It sure looks that way. What will they think our Nation, once founded with the high ideals of patriotism, sacrifice and rebellion against entrenched interests? What has happened to that Republic?

The dollar amounts being tossed around in the 2000 Presidential race make it only a matter time before another giant scandal rocks our government and further undermines the confidence in our body politic and our very system of government. We must curb this arms race now before it's too late.

H. Con. Res. 6, which I have introduced, reaffirms that presence of unlimited amounts of money is corrupting our political process in a fundamental manner. I encourage my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this legislation and for Americans to pay attention and call this important issue to the attention of their representatives and of those Presidential candidates when they whiz through town.

America needs a new declaration of independence to take our politics back from the money handlers, the bundlers, the lobbyists, the spin doctors and the telemarketers, which is what Presidential campaigns have become, telemarketing, with $1 billion being put on television.

Let's return our Republic, if we can, to the American people and, more importantly, a free Republic to our children.

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

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

REINTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO SUPPORT THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF ANCIENT REMAINS

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, last month the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs approved a bill that included a two-word addition to existing law that effectively blocks the scientific study of ancient skeletal remains discovered on Federal land. This change, tucked into what is being called a technical corrections bill, is very far from a minor ''technical correction.'' It is a fundamental shift in existing law and would overturn a decision of the Ninth Circuit Court, which is second only to the Supreme Court. Such an extreme action should not be hidden within a mostly noncontroversial bill.

In its ruling, the Ninth Circuit Court expressly allowed the research and scientific study of ancient human remains found in the United States. The Senate bill seeks to quietly erase our Nation's ability to study our past and the planet's human history. The Tri-Cities community in my central Washington district needs no introduction to this issue. They experienced firsthand the court battles that ensued after the 9,300-year-old Kennewick Man remains were discovered on the banks of the Columbia River in 1996. These remains are among the oldest found in North America, and the quality of the remains has the potential to yield researchers greater insight into the early history of man in North America.

A full 8 years after the Kennewick Man's discovery, the Ninth Circuit Court ruled in 2004, as I have explained, that the remains were to be studied by scientists. Then, during the last Congress, the Senate first sought its two-word addition in ''technical corrections.'' I introduced a bill to challenge and publicize this action.

Members of the Senate committee decided to try again last month in this Congress. I am forced once again to respond by reintroducing my bill. My bill very simply and plainly ensures the ability for scientific study of truly ancient remains. If this matter is pushed to the Senate, then let us have a full, open and honest debate about what the Senate Indian Affairs Committee would do to scientific study in our country. The effort to quietly slide through such a dramatic change needs to stop. Those who support it should explain why and give a justification.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the introduction of my legislation will help bring balance to what is being done on the other side of the Capitol, and that scientific inquiry is not extinguished through the quiet acts of the United States.

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.)

FACTS ABOUT NICS

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. Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to some inaccurate information being spread on H.R. 2640, the NICS Improvement Amendments Act. As you know, Federal law prohibits nine groups of individuals from obtaining a firearm. One such group includes individuals who are determined to be mentally ill or who were committed to a mental institution. These determinations and commitments are made in accordance with the State law and always in accordance with due process. One purpose of H.R. 2640 is to ensure that information on these people make it into the Federal gun background check system.

According to officials at the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA officials make no determination or commitment regarding the legal mental health status of any of our veterans. However, some groups continue to believe that the VA is sending data to the NICS system on veterans who do not meet the disqualification of gun rights.

To ensure our veterans are not losing their gun rights, I included several protective provisions in H.R. 2640. These provisions ensure two things. First, the VA will only provide records on veterans determined by the same procedures that apply to nonveterans in regards to mental health. Second, they require that the removal from NICS of a veteran's records that do not meet the law's standards.

The intent and purpose of these sections is clear. NICS should only have information on veterans disqualified