

have an opportunity to pass the omnibus appropriations bill and the AMT fix.

I urge a “yes” vote on the previous question and the rule.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2764, CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 893 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 893

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2764) making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment thereto, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI, a motion offered by the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The Senate amendment and the motion shall be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to its adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. Upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 72) making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the joint resolution are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The joint resolution shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions of the joint resolution are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the joint resolution to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations; and (2) one motion to recommit.

SEC. 3. During consideration of House Joint Resolution 72 or the motion to concur pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of either measure to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

SEC. 4. House Resolution 849 is laid upon the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 893.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, H. Res. 893 provides for consideration of two measures, an amendment to the omnibus appropriations bill to provide funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and a continuing resolution. Each measure is debatable for 1 hour.

The continuing resolution is necessary to keep the government open and running while the omnibus bill is processed and sent to the White House for the President's signature.

Madam Speaker, while I have no problem with the rule that is before us, I cannot support the underlying funding for Iraq. The tens of billions in new money for the war in Iraq has no timetables for withdrawal, no limitations, no requirements that the Iraqi Government make progress towards reconciliation, no benchmarks, no conditionality, nothing. Madam Speaker, this is a blank check.

The new money in this bill represents one cave-in too many. It is an endorsement of George Bush's policy of endless war. It is stunning that so many have gone along for so long asking no questions, giving this President everything he wants.

After years of Bush ineptitude, how dare this Congress provide another blank check for this administration. No weapons of mass destruction, a constantly changing rationale for our occupation, benchmarks for the Iraqi Government that never get met, no democracy, no respect for human rights, no reconciliation, a government plagued with corruption, and no end in sight. All this, Madam Speaker, and some of my colleagues still say, “stay the course.”

Our brave men and women in uniform have done their job. So many have sacrificed, and far too many have made the ultimate sacrifice. They have been successful in some areas of Iraq in quelling some of the violence, essentially providing the chance, the window of opportunity for the Iraqi Government to move ahead with efforts for reconciliation.

□ 1215

The response of the Iraqi Government has been to do nothing. No reconciliation.

Isn't our responsibility, as Members of Congress, to raise questions?

Shouldn't we put pressure on the Iraqi Government to do more? And shouldn't we put pressure on our own government to not be such a cheap date? Don't we owe our soldiers whom we put in harm's way better than acquiescence to a Commander in Chief who is incapable of ever admitting error?

Madam Speaker, there is no military victory to be had in Iraq. To the extent that this awful situation becomes less awful depends on political progress, something the Maliki government doesn't want to do, and something our own leaders seem willing to keep putting off.

I want more, Madam Speaker, I expect more, for the sacrifice our troops have made. Quite frankly, the status quo is not worth one more American dollar or one more drop of American blood. I am sick to my stomach when I think of the hundreds of billions of dollars that we have already spent in Iraq while we nickel and dime our own people at home. None of this war is paid for. It is all borrowed money. It's all on the backs of our kids. It's all debt that is being bought up every day by China.

Madam Speaker, I long for the day when we have a President who will threaten a veto on a bill that fails to provide all our people with health care, or that fails to adequately fund education for our children. Instead, we have a White House that engages in blackmail tactics: Give me what I want on Iraq, with no strings attached, or I'll shut the government down.

Those who defend the status quo say that we need to give the President whatever he wants so we can assure “victory.” “Victory” at the beginning of this war was ridding Saddam Hussein of weapons of mass destruction. When we found that there were none, the definition of “victory” changed. In fact, over the last 5 years, the definition of “victory” has changed several times.

For me, the closest thing to victory is ending this war, getting an Iraqi Government that puts national reconciliation above its own self-interest and getting our troops out of that country and home to their families where they belong. I believe the surest way to get that type of victory is setting a firm timetable for the U.S. occupation of Iraq to end. It will change the dynamic, and it will force the Iraqi Government to embrace, rather than avoid, reconciliation.

In fact, in today's Washington Post, the U.S. military has found that the strongest point of agreement among all Iraqis across all sectarian and ethnic groups is the belief that the U.S. military invasion of their country is the primary root of the violent differences among them and that the departure of “occupying forces,” their words, is the key to national reconciliation.

Madam Speaker, the Iraqi people themselves firmly believe that reconciliation will not happen until we leave. If the Iraqi people want us to

leave, and a majority of the Iraqi Government want us to leave, and a majority of the American people want us to leave, then why on Earth are we staying?

Let me also state, Madam Speaker, what "victory" is not. It is not allowing this President to kick the ball down the field and dump this war on the next President of the United States. That is called "passing the buck," and that is what we will be doing if we approve this new Iraq money.

One final observation. The war in Iraq has not only cost us dearly in terms of human life and treasure, it has also cost us in terms of our standing in the world. We have lost the support and the respect of so many who have looked to us as a force for what is good, decent and positive in world affairs. I warn my colleagues that our lost prestige and standing is also a threat to our national security. Madam Speaker, I want my country back.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, first I would like to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

We are here 80 days into the new fiscal year, and one appropriations bill has been signed into law. Today, we are here to consider hopefully the last piece of the appropriations puzzle, as well as yet another continuing resolution before the omnibus appropriations bill is sent to the President.

What is so interesting about this process is that the omnibus bill that has finally come before the House in many ways is very similar to the proposals that the minority has advocated for months, and is very similar to what we predicted would, in fact, be the legislation that ultimately would become law. However, Madam Speaker, instead of working toward a compromise, a bipartisan resolution to this legislation, a bipartisan product, the majority decided to use the appropriations process to, in effect, score political points while funding for our troops in critical theaters of operation has been dangerously delayed.

Now, the underlying amendment we will consider today will finally help bring our appropriations process to a close, and it will do so in a fiscally responsible manner, funding the Federal Government and funding our troops in critical theaters of operation without preconditions and without strings. These funds will allow for the progress that we have recently seen to continue to take hold. It will allow for our men and women in uniform to continue to do their job as they have done so, so effectively, in fact, so heroically for so long.

I think commendation is due. I think congratulations is due to all who have worked on this process, and that congratulations I think is due to those on both sides of the aisle who have worked

hard, have worked diligently, to come up with this final appropriations legislation work product that will fund the Federal Government for the next fiscal year, and especially, as I have said, will continue to fund in critical theaters of operation our men and women who are doing such an extraordinary job and who deserve our unrestricted support.

There are very important, very important endeavors, efforts and projects that are funded in this appropriations bill, in this omnibus appropriations bill. We cannot, I believe, emphasize sufficiently, especially at this critical time, our support and the continued need of our support for our great ally and friend, Israel, that lives in an area of the world that is extremely dangerous. And while we have the benefit of thousands of miles between, for example, the state sponsor of terrorism in Iran, the regime in Iran, Madam Speaker, while we have thousands of miles physically separating us from that state sponsor of terrorism, our friend and ally, Israel, does not. And so I have always felt very strongly about our need to support Israel. The fact that this appropriations legislation includes the support that it does for our friend and ally, Israel, is something that I think is very important. And there are many, many aspects of this legislation that we, on a bipartisan basis, can be very proud of. And we, I think, will have further opportunity to discuss them.

But today, I am told that there are some glitches that need to be worked out, and that the majority needs some time and the appropriators need some time on both sides of the aisle to work them out. So we will be hopefully seeing those glitches being resolved in the next minutes and hours.

As we wait for those glitches to be resolved, we are cognizant of the fact that we are finally bringing to the floor the rule that will allow for consideration of the final legislative product on the appropriations for this year.

With that in mind, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, if I can inquire if the gentleman from Florida has additional speakers.

I will reserve my time at this point.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I would like, at this time, Madam Speaker, to yield such time as he may consume to the distinguished member of the Rules Committee, my friend, Mr. SESSIONS of Texas.

Mr. SESSIONS. I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, my friend, for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, we are here right now for the purpose of providing for the consideration of the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 2764. That is what we are here for. I will repeat that. We are here for providing for the consideration of the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment. It is rather confusing, not just to Members

of Congress. It is confusing, I think, to the American people, also.

Madam Speaker, today, I would like to just read from the Calendar, Wednesday, December 19 on the back page, "Status of Major Bills, First Session." Here is essentially what it says.

It says that Homeland Security appropriations was completed on June 8 in the House and July 26 in the Senate. Never sent to conference.

Energy and Water appropriations, July 17. Never completed by the Senate.

Military Construction and VA, June 15 in the House, September 6 in the Senate.

The new fiscal year has already started. This new Democrat majority has been sitting on these bills, including the VA, since September 6. And yet they are coming to the floor today just a week before Christmas terribly upset, terribly upset, and yet it says here, let me see if I got this right, sent to conference, these are all blanks. They didn't go to conference. The Speaker of the House and the Senate majority leader never had a conference. They didn't get together to try and work out the differences that they had. What they did is they let Members sit day after day after day.

Just 1 year and 75 days ago, when Republicans had completed all but one of these bills, we were called irresponsible and we couldn't do the people's business. And yet here we are, 1 year later plus 75 days, and only one of the bills has made it to the President. I could keep going. Financial Services and General Government; Labor, Health, Human Services and Education.

My gosh, what is happening?

□ 1230

What is happening to this House of Representatives and the United States Congress? What is happening is that I believe we had what I would consider to be false hopes and promises that were established in the first place about all these problems that were going to go away. Just give our good friends, the Democrats, that ability to hold the House and Senate, and they will do it. But, Madam Speaker, they didn't even get the work done between themselves, forget blaming things on the President of the United States or Republicans. They couldn't even appoint their own conferees. They couldn't even do their own work.

Today, we sit here and listen to all the things that are still wrong and about how Republicans have stood in the way and been obstructionists. That is not the facts of the case. The facts of the case are all these bills that I have talked about were never even sent to a conference, and today, the reason why we are still talking is because allegedly there is a glitch, a glitch, because the negotiations between the majority in the House and the majority in the Senate couldn't get it right. Well, if you do things in the dark, if you do things where nobody else is involved, that is

what you get. I am told it's a \$70 billion mistake.

I just don't understand why business is done this way, when 1 year ago we had all but one bill done before the election. All but one. If you systematically go through a process and work through the bills in the light of day, where the information is posted on the Web site, where you give people time to read the bill, I think a better result happens.

I think it's deceptive. I think it's deceptive to say that this House would be the most honest, open, and ethical Congress in the history, when there was no attempt from the very beginning to even live up to that.

So here we are, just a few days before Christmas, still burning time, trying to burn time, because we know that the negotiators have to fix the problems, and that is a real problem to this House, and I think it is to the American people.

Madam Speaker, I would like to take just a few minutes to say this. The Republican Party congratulates our colleagues and all of us today for presumably ending what we are doing, and I am pleased to say that it was a victory for the taxpayers because we are not going to increase taxes, as our good friends the Democrats wanted to do and have bemoaned all week long about not getting that massive tax increase.

We are going to go and make sure in SCHIP that we don't take 2 million children from their own private insurance to a government-run program that is still overburdened. We are going to make sure that we don't do, I think, bad things in dealing with our ability to find terrorists with the FISA bill.

So it's a great victory today for the taxpayer, for the people who want to protect this country, because what has prevailed is what we said should happen, and that is that the Republican minority kept after this process to make sure that the taxpayers don't lose on this last day before we leave before Christmas, and we are going to stay after that because we believe we are doing the right thing.

I am proud of what we will accomplish here today if we can find this \$70 billion mistake that has happened and we can close the books on the year and know we went home with no further damage.

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

First, let me just respond to the gentleman from Texas by saying he is entitled to his own opinions, but he is not entitled to make up the facts. The facts are that the difference between this Congress under the Democratic majority and under the previous Congress under the Republican majority is they left Washington before their work was done. They kicked all their work onto the Democratic Congress that was elected last November. They didn't do their job. If the Congress could be sued for malpractice, they would have been sued for malpractice.

The bills that we are dealing with today the House of Representatives passed in a timely manner, all of the appropriations bills, as we were supposed to do. We did it, and they were good bills, and I commend Chairman OBEY for his work on those bills. We did that in spite of all the obstructionism and resistance from the Republicans in this House.

Unfortunately, because of the Senate rules, an individual Member, and in the case of the Senate, the Senate minority leader, was successful in slowing down the process and preventing conference committees from meeting and preventing the Senate from considering certain bills. Now they can be proud of that. That is just obstructionism. That is not doing the people's business. But the bottom line is that we are here today dealing with an omnibus appropriations bill to get the people's business done; not to kick the ball down the field and dump it on next year's Congress. It is to do it now.

One other thing, Madam Speaker, and that is one of the major differences with the new Democratic majority is that we have helped undo some of the damage that the Republicans have done to domestic spending over the years. Because of the Democratic majority and our ability to reorder priority, education is better off today than it would be if the Republicans were in control. Medical research, there is more money for medical research to find lifesaving drugs and to find cures to disease because the Democrats made that a priority, over the Republican objections. Our veterans are getting a better deal today. Under the Democratic majority, there is the largest single-year increase in veterans health in the history of the Veterans Administration. Those are the things that we have done.

Today, we are considering a Senate addition to what we did in the House, which I have an objection to, and that is the funding for the war in Iraq. The Republicans, while they were in control, gave the President a blank check; no accountability, no questions asked, nothing. And here we are, the fifth year into this war, with no end in sight, and there are some of us who believe the time has come to call the President to account, to start the process of bringing our troops home so they can be reunited with their families.

So there's a huge difference between the Democrats and the Republicans.

Madam Speaker, at this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. ETHERIDGE.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and the omnibus appropriations bill. Finally, some good news from Washington. I am very pleased that the House has scheduled to vote on the disaster assistance package to provide relief to our farmers suffering from a record drought and record heat

in the Southeast. My farmers are hurting. This omnibus appropriations bill will provide some \$600 million for disaster assistance.

My congressional district in North Carolina has been affected by what is called "exceptional drought." That is the most serious category that you can have. This aid will bring real relief to our rural communities. I have been proud to lead the charge on this effort. In September, I wrote a bipartisan letter to the President, signed by 54 of my colleagues from both political parties, to make the case for drought relief.

I have been very pleased to be able to work with Speaker PELOSI, Majority Leader HOYER, Majority Whip CLYBURN, Ag Chair PETERSON, and Appropriations Chairman OBEY to get this done. I want to thank them for their critical help. This is important to rural America. I also want to thank the Governor of North Carolina, Mike Easley, for his leadership.

Madam Speaker, I grew up in Johnston County and lived in farm country all my life. As a senior member of the House Ag Committee, I am also pleased that we have finally gotten this football to the end zone. This disaster assistance and the other things in this bill are a major achievement, and it's an important step forward, especially for America's farmers and the consumers of this country.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for it.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to the gentleman from Arizona, Mr. FLAKE.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I oppose this rule that will allow this omnibus to be brought to the floor. We had some discussion yesterday, and it should continue today, about the over 9,000 earmarks that are in this bill. It was mentioned by the majority leader yesterday, or the day before. He said, "Having said that," in justification for bringing this bill forward, when it was pointed out that many of these earmarks had been brought to the floor for the first time with this bill, he said, "this bill incorporates all of the bills that passed this House. This is not as if these are items of first impression. These are bills that we considered in this House and passed with essentially overwhelming bipartisan votes."

That is only partly true. Yes, these bills, many of them were brought to the House before. A few of them left the House earmark-free. One of them, the Department of Homeland Security bill, we were told we can let this one go and not have the earmarks added because it isn't traditionally earmarked. Guess what? There are more than 100 earmarks that have now been air-dropped into that bill. We are sitting today with hundreds, literally hundreds of earmarks that have been air-dropped into the bill that we have never seen before yesterday. Never seen before yesterday, or Monday, I should say. That is simply wrong.

Let me give you just a couple of examples. There was \$1.6 million for the City of Bastrop, Louisiana. According to the Bastrop Daily Enterprise, "The money is officially earmarked for the purchase of bulletproof vests and body armor. Bulletproof vests only cost about \$700 to \$800, however, so \$1.6 million would appear to be overkill." Police Chief Curtis Stephenson agrees, conceding, "There's no way we need that kind of money just to put all our people in vests." Again, this was an earmark for bulletproof vests for the police officers in this city, and the city comes back and says, We don't have that many police officers.

We are told that these earmarks are vetted. How are they vetted? The answer is they are really not. They are not vetted by that party; they aren't vetted by this party. It's more of a game of "Can you catch me with my hand in the cookie jar or not?"

Earlier this year, when I was challenging a couple of earmarks on the floor, one Member who had one of the earmarks I was going to challenge beat me to the floor to withdraw his own earmark because he didn't want the scrutiny that would come if that earmark were publicly debated. Later that same week, the Appropriations Committee, when they found out certain other earmarks might be challenged on the floor, called the Rules Committee and struck some other earmarks that were to be debated on the House floor because they couldn't withstand the scrutiny. That isn't vetting. That is hoping that your hand isn't caught in the cookie jar.

Now we have this bill today with over 9,000 of these earmarks. Now, the majority will say, Hey, that is a 17 percent reduction in the number of earmarks in our worst year. Put another way, that's like saying, You know, last year I smoked five packs a day and I am down to three this year. I darn-well quit. That is hardly something to pat ourselves on the back about.

Put another way, we have just 17 percent fewer earmarks than the worst year in congressional history for earmarking. Please don't use this side of the aisle as a bar with which to judge yourselves. That is a bar that a snake could crawl over. We didn't handle ourselves well in the majority with regard to earmarks. That is one of the big reasons we find ourselves in the minority today. But when the new majority came into power in January of this year, we were told that we would have transparency, that we would have names next to earmarks, that there would be time to actually discuss these earmarks and debate them, that if there were earmarks air-dropped into a bill, there would be an opportunity to strike all earmarks, at least one vote.

We don't have that today because this isn't a conference report. You simply have to change the name of the bill that is coming to the floor and you obviate your obligation to live by your own rules. That is simply not right. It's nothing that we should be proud of.

I mentioned earlier on the floor today that an astute Member of Congress told me yesterday one of the toughest parts of being a Member of Congress is to remember what we should be outraged about. I would submit that this is something that we should be outraged about, but we are not. We blithely pass it as if this is standard business. It shouldn't be. It shouldn't have been for us when we were in the majority, and it shouldn't be for the new majority.

It was in a press report yesterday that some Members were upset, I think justifiably, that there seemed to be just a few Members getting all the earmarks. They mentioned in the press article that a lot of the earmarks are going to the vulnerable Members instead of to the established Members in their district.

I would say that that is something I think outside of the Beltway people say that is just wrong, for money to go to Members just to be re-elected. But here, unfortunately, we see that and say, Hey, that is one of the noblest purposes we have seen for earmarks. Usually they're tied to campaign contributions or something else.

We need a moratorium on earmarks. We should pass a CR rather than this omnibus and go into next year without these 9,000 earmarks.

□ 1245

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, December 18, 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 December 18, 2007, at 11:42 p.m.:

Senate concurred in House amendment No. (2) with an amendment H.R. 2764.

Senate concurred in House amendment No. (1) H.R. 2764.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Secretary be directed to request the House to return to the Senate the bill and all accompanying papers relative to (H.R. 2764) "An Act making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.", and that upon the

compliance of the request, the Secretary of the Senate be authorized to make corrections in the engrossment of the aforesaid bill.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2764, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008 (CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008) AND FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.J. RES. 72, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS, FISCAL YEAR 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts.

As I stand here, I am looking at the lights in this Chamber and I must say to my colleagues that they are very bright. Symbolically, then, as we stand here on the floor of the House, we should be transparent, the lights should be on, and we should tell the truth. And so it is important for me to just hold up a summary of the works of the Democrats who worked without ceasing to reestablish priorities so that the maligned omnibus bill that my good friends on the other side of the aisle are talking about all the bad things, really, they are not shedding the light on the truth. Let me share with you simply what we have tried to do in the midst of opposition and obstructionism.

I wish the administration would have collaborated with us, but we fought hard. And so out of this work comes increased medical research, \$607 million for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease and diabetes, which hits the 18th Congressional District in insurmountable numbers.

Health care of \$1 billion above the President's request that will focus resources in St. Joseph's Hospital and Doctors Hospital and potentially community health clinics that have worked on, like the Martin Luther King Community Health Clinic which needs additional dollars because of the increasing numbers of health problems in my congressional district. In K-12, my congressional district has the highest percentage of those students on title I in the State of Texas, and we have been able to increase that by \$767 million.

In addition, I went to the University of Houston to talk to those students who were standing in throngs asking about college aid, and I made a promise to them that we would not abandon their opportunity for their future and their desires and their dreams. And so this bill gives \$1.7 billion above the