

On November 13 of this year, a Turkish warship issued threats to two foreign flagged maritime vessels conducting an exploratory survey at the request of the Government of Cyprus, within its exclusive economic zone, EEZ. The Turkish warship claimed that these vessels had entered into Turkey's EEZ. Fearing retaliation, the exploratory ships withdrew. However, at the time of this threat, these two ships had been located 27 miles off the coast of Cyprus, which is included within its EEZ boundaries.

In addition to this most recent incident, Turkey has used the waters of the Republic of Cyprus to conduct military exercises numerous times. Furthermore, even after Cyprus's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Minas Hadjimichael, and President of the Republic of Cyprus, Demetris Christofias, notified the U.N. Secretary-General of the November 13th Turkish provocation, Turkish warships continue to harass ships within Cyprus's EEZ.

Turkey's recent violations of international maritime law not only jeopardize the possibility for the re-unification of Cyprus, but they also endanger global security. In just one month, Turkey is to become a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, the same governing body that has frequently denounced Turkey's disregard for Cyprus's sovereignty. If Turkey violates the conditions to which it agreed when it joined the United Nations as they pertain to Cyprus—conditions that mandate each Member State's respect for the sovereignty of all States—who is to say that it will not violate its obligation to any other nation, including the United States? For Turkey to threaten the Republic of Cyprus—a nation that has been a staunch supporter of the United States and one that has been an unwavering ally in the Global War on Terror—is disturbing. The United States cannot simply remain silent and watch these provocative acts take place.

Madam Speaker, enough is enough. I encourage my colleagues to join me in condemning Turkey's blatant and repeated acts of aggression against the Republic of Cyprus and to demand that Turkey abide by the provisions to which it agreed when it joined the United Nations, provisions that the Republic of Cyprus has continually observed with pride.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE
JOE KNOLLENBERG ON THE OC-
CASION OF HIS RETIREMENT
FROM THE U.S. HOUSE OF REP-
RESENTATIVES

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the distinguished career of the Honorable JOE KNOLLENBERG for his service to the people of Michigan and the United States House of Representatives. Congressman KNOLLENBERG has represented the Ninth Congressional District of the State of Michigan for the past 16 years.

Born and raised in Mattoon, Illinois, JOE is a graduate of East Illinois University. After

-serving in the Army for 2 years, he moved to the Detroit area in 1959 to work as an Allstate Insurance agent and eventually opened his own branch office.

JOE quickly became a familiar face in his community serving as PTA president, homeowner association president and parish leader. He also chaired the Oakland County GOP organization and directed the campaign of Republican Representative William S. Broomfield in 1992.

Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1992, JOE has served as chairman of three House Appropriations subcommittees during his tenure. He currently serves as the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development.

An ardent supporter of auto manufacturers, an integral part of Michigan's economy, JOE authored legislation that cracked down on counterfeiters who make fraudulent automotive parts that cost Americans thousands of jobs in the automotive industry.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dedicated leader and friend to many in this body. I know his family, his wife of 45 years, Sandie; his two sons, Marty and Steve; and his many friends and colleagues join me in honoring his accomplishments and extending thanks for his service over the years on behalf of the State of Michigan and the United States of America.

JOE will surely enjoy the well deserved time he now has to spend with his family and loved ones. I wish him the best of luck in all his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 7330 THE
"COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF
ACT OF 2008"

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Madam Speaker, the Energy and Commerce Committee is vested with the responsibility for overseeing sports, and that includes the current process for determining a national college football champion: the BCS system. College football is more than an exhilarating sport, it's a billion-dollar business. I'm introducing legislation today because despite every effort to fix the problems of BCS, college seasons still end in sniping and controversy, rather than clear winners and losers determined on the field.

The BCS system was created to identify a broadly accepted national champion, but 50 percent of the time it has failed to do so. Most coaches who lose half their games would also lose their jobs. Yet that's what we settle for in determining a champion today.

The BCS system of determining America's top collegiate team was established in 1998 and has been plagued by controversy almost ever since. In some years the sport's national championship winner was left unsettled, and at least one school was left out of the many millions of dollars in revenue that accompany the title. Despite repeated efforts to improve the system, the controversy rages on.

In the 2003 season, the University of Oklahoma and Louisiana State University were selected to play in the title game, even though the University of Southern California arguably had an equal claim. LSU beat Oklahoma and USC also won its bowl game, leaving both schools claiming to be national champions and further chafing millions of college football fans, especially USC alumni. As a direct result of LSU's selection by BCS, the school's merchandise sales in both 2003 and 2004 were more than double previous levels, producing millions of dollars in additional revenue for the school.

In the 2004 season, again three equally qualified and, in this case, undefeated teams—Auburn, Oklahoma and USC—fought for the two slots in the title game, which once again produced an uneven outcome as USC defeated Oklahoma handily. Auburn won its game, but had no opportunity to play for a national championship and the millions of dollars that accompany it.

This year, we again have two teams with one loss each playing for the "championship" while two undefeated teams and four additional teams with only one loss will play in bowl games, but none can become "champion."

The distinction of being the best brings millions of dollars in revenue, but the BCS method of determining who is number one consistently misfires. When we held our first hearing on BCS in 2005, I didn't have legislation in mind, and I hoped none would be necessary. Simply exposing the flaws and subjecting them to discussion, however, hasn't led to improvement by those who run the system.

The legislation I am introducing along with Congressmen BOBBY RUSH and MICHAEL MCCAUL recognizes the flaws of this system. Consumers, whether the millions who watch the game on TV or the lucky few who pay for a ticket to the computer-designated "championship" game, are being deceived. The BCS championship game is not a championship game under any sensible interpretation of the manner in which sports champions are determined.

The legislation we are introducing today will prohibit the marketing, promotion, and advertising of a post-season game as a "national championship" football game, unless it is the result of a playoff system. Violations of the prohibition will be treated as violations of the Federal Trade Commission Act as an unfair or deceptive act or practice, and provides the FTC with civil penalty authority.

The legislation does not specify the details of the playoff system; rather, it ensures that that all Division I, Football Bowl Subdivision, teams should be initially eligible at the start of every season. The existing bowl structure could easily be incorporated into or as the basis for such a playoff system.

We're never going to abolish all controversy, and who'd really want to be rid of it, anyway? People will argue about who should be in and out of playoffs, too, but I am confident when more of the most deserving teams can compete, a true national champion is much likelier to emerge.